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LECTURES

ON THE

SACRED POETRY

OF THE

HEBREWS;

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF THE

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LATE PRÆLECTOR OF POETRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, AND NOW LORD BISHOP OF LONDON,

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TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE PRINCIPAL NOTES OF PROFESSOR MICHAELIS, AND NOTES BY THE TRANSLATOR AND OTHERS.

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LECTURES

ON THE

SACRED POETRY

OF THE

HEBREWS.

PART III.

OF THE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF POETRY EXTANT IN THE WRITINGS OF THE HEBREWS.

OF PROPHETIC POETRY.

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The poetry of the Hebrews claſſed according to its different characters; this mode of arrangement reſults rather from the nature of the ſubject, than from any authority of the Hebrews themſelves.—The PROPHETIC POETRY.—*The writings of the prophets in general poetical and metrical.—The opinion of the modern Jews and of Jerome on this point refuted.—In the books of the prophets the ſame evidences are found of a metrical arrangement as in the poetical books: in the dialect, the ſtyle, and poetical conformation of the ſentences.—Obvious in reſpect to the two former circumſtances; the latter requires a more minute inveſtigation, and alſo illuſtration by examples.—The intimate relation between Poetry and Prophecy.—The college of Prophets; a part of whoſe diſcipline it was to ſing Hymns to the different inſtruments; and this exerciſe was called prophecy: the ſame word, therefore, denotes a prophet, a poet, and a muſician.—Eliſha, when about to pronounce the Oracle of God, orders a minſtrel to be brought to him.—Poetry excellently adapted to the purpoſe of prophecy.—A review of the moſt ancient predictions extant in the hiſtorical books, which are proved to be truly poetical.*

OF the general nature and properties of the Hebrew poetry I have already treated: diffuſely enough, if the extent of the diſquiſitions be conſidered; but too briefly, I fear, and too imperfectly; if reſpect be

be had to the copiouſneſs and importance of the ſubject. My original deſign, however, extended no farther than to notice the moſt remarkable paſſages, and ſuch as I conceived to be immediately illuſtrative of the peculiarities of the Hebrew ſtyle. Even theſe it was my wiſh and intention rather to point out and recommend to your own conſideration, than minutely to inveſtigate and explain, eſteeming it my province rather to exhort and ſtimulate to theſe ſtudies, than to intrude upon this audience a formal plan of inſtruction. It would be ſuperfluous, I am perſuaded, to remind you, that the importance of the ſubject is not to be eſtimated by the feebleneſs of my endeavours; and, I truſt, it would be ſtill more unneceſſary to caution you againſt a haſty acquieſcence in any interpretation of thoſe paſſages, which I have quoted, much leſs in my own: though I will frankly confeſs, that I have beſtowed no ſmall degree of labour and attention upon this part of my undertaking. What remains at preſent, is to diſtribute into its different claſſes the whole of the Hebrew poetry, and to mark whatever is worthy of obſervation in each ſpecies. In

forming this arrangement it will hardly be expected that I ſhould uniformly proceed according to the teſtimony of the Hebrews, or on all occaſions confirm the propriety of my claſſification by their authority; ſince it is plain that they were but little verſed in theſe nice and artificial diſtinctions. It will be ſufficient for our purpoſe, that is, it will be ſufficient for the accurate explanation of the different characters of the Hebrew poetry, if I demonſtrate that theſe characters are ſtamped by the hand of nature, and that they are diſplayed either in the ſubject itſelf, the diſpoſition of its conſtituent parts, the diverſity of ſtyle, or in the general form and arrangement of the poem.

The firſt rank I aſſign to the PROPHETIC, or that ſpecies of poetry which is found to pervade the predictions of the prophets, as well thoſe contained in the books properly called prophetical, as thoſe which occaſionally occur in other parts of the Scriptures. Theſe, I apprehend, will be generally allowed to be written in a ſtyle truly poetical, indeed admirable in its kind; as the many examples, which we have already produced, will ſufficiently demonſtrate. I fear, however, it will not

not be ſo readily granted that their claim is equally well-founded with that of the books, which are commonly called poetical, to the other characteriſtic of poetry, I mean verſe, or metrical compoſition. This fact is denied by the Jews [1]; and is denied by Jerome [2], who was a diligent ſcholar of the Rabbinical writers: after theſe, it is unneceſſary to refer to more recent authors, who partly deny that the Hebrews were poſſeſſed of any metre at all, and partly allow it to thoſe

[1] ABARBANEL diſtinguiſhes three ſpecies of canticles. The firſt is the *rythmical*, or that with ſimilar endings; in uſe among the more modern Hebrews (who learned it from the Arabic writers) but which was certainly unknown to the authors of the Holy Scriptures. The ſecond was adapted to muſic, and ſung either alone or accompanied with inſtruments, ſuch are the ſongs of Moſes, of Deborah, of David. The third ſpecies conſiſts of parables, or proverbs, which ſpecies, ſays he (though by the way abſurdly enough, as is not uncommon with the Rabbinical writers) is properly denominated *Shir*. From this claſs, however, he excludes the parables of the prophets, according to the diſtinction of Maimonides between prophecy and the Holy Spirit. (See *More Neboc.* ii. 45.) He ſays they are not canticles, becauſe they are not the work of the prophet himſelf, but the mere effect of the prophetic inſpiration. *Mantiſſa Diſſert. ad Libr.* COSRI, p. 413. *Author's Note.*

[2] See JEROME, preface to ISAIAH.

compoſitions only, which are commonly called poetical, or at moſt extend the conception to a few canticles ſcattered through other parts of the Scriptures. A thinking perſon, however, will not be miſled by ſuch authorities as theſe, before he examines whether they are to be accounted competent judges in this caſe, and what weight and credit is due to their teſtimony.

The Jews, by their own confeſſion, are no longer, nor have been indeed for many ages, maſters of the ſyſtem of the ancient metre. All remembrance of it has ceaſed from thoſe times in which the Hebrew became a dead language [3]; and it really ſeems probable, that the Maſorites (of whom ſo little is known) who afterwards diſtinguiſhed the ſacred volumes by accents and vowel points, as they are now extant, were poſſeſſed of ſo trifling and imperfect a knowledge of this ſubject, that they were even incapable of diſtinguiſhing what was written in metre from plain proſe. For when, ac-

[3] "It cannot be doubted that the Canticles of the ſecond ſpecies were poſſeſſed of a certain melody or metre, which through the length of the captivity is become obſolete." ABARBANEL, ib. 410.

cording

cording to their manner, they marked certain books as metrical, namely, the Pſalms, the Proverbs, and the book of Job; they accounted others, which are no leſs evidently metrical, abſolutely proſaick, ſuch as the Song of Solomon, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and conſequently aſſigned to them the common proſe accent only. In this opinion the Jews univerſally remain, and deny that theſe books are at all metrical, or to be claſſed with the three former[*]. Now the diſciple

[*] The Song of Solomon is indeed allowed by the Jews to be a poem; not however from the nature of the compoſition, or from its being metrical, but merely becauſe it is of the parabolic kind: and therefore it is referred by ABARBANEL to the third ſpecies of Canticle. Whence it happens that, though in ſome MSS. copies the three metrical books are written in a verſified form, the Lamentations and Song of Songs are differently tranſcribed. This I have obſerved to be the caſe with the Vatican MS. which is deſervedly accounted one of the moſt ancient, its date being the year DCCCCLXXIX of our Chriſtian æra. The ſame is obſervable in many other MSS. as I have been informed by my learned friend, Dr. KENNICOT, whoſe HEBREW BIBLE WITH THE VARIOUS READINGS is now in the preſs, and already in great forwardneſs. Indeed, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that when the Jews exhibit certain Canticles, and even whole books in a poetical or verſified order, they followed, or pretended

diſciple is hardly to be ſuppoſed to have more information than his maſters; and although Jerome ſpeaks very fluently about the Tetrameters, the Hexameters, the Sapphics, and Iambics of the Hebrews, the very ſtate and circumſtances of the caſe demonſtrate how little credit is due to his authority. Indeed his reaſoning evidently proceeds from a confuſed

to follow the true nature of the Hebrew verſe, or the proper diſtribution of the lines. But the great diſagreement between them in this reſpect is a proof of their ignorance, for they ſeldom agree with one another in the termination of the lines, or follow any determinate rule in this matter. The diſtribution of the verſes is different in different copies, as may be immediately obſerved on comparing them. In the Song of Moſes, DEUT. xxxii. in which the different editions agree better than in any other (and indeed there was but little room for diſagreement, the ſenſe always pointing out of itſelf the order of the ſentences) in this, notwithſtanding, the Rabbies have contrived to differ, ſome of them dividing it into 67, and ſome into 70 verſes or lines. See *Annot. ad Bib. Heb.* Edit. MICHAELIS, *Halæ* 1720. Among the MSS. copies of the metrical books the diſagreement is equally manifeſt, as the above excellent critic proved upon a very ſtrict examination, undertaken at my requeſt. In a very famous MS. which I ſaw in the Royal Library at Dreſden, I remarked a circumſtance that clearly demonſtrates the perfect ignorance and abſurdity of the Jews in this reſpect.

The

confuſed head, when he attempts to trace a ſort of remote ſimilarity between the Greek and Hebrew metres; and to explain by ſome coarſe analogies a ſubject, which he appears to have very imperfectly underſtood: in treating of which, after all, he is not able to preſerve even the appearance of conſiſtency. For inſtance, after Joſephus and Origen, he contends [5], that the Song of Moſes in Deuteronomy is compoſed in Hexameter and Pentameter verſe; in another place, however, he affirms that the very ſame poem conſiſts of Iambic Tetrameters [6]. In proof of his

The Chaldee paraphraſe was intermingled with the text throughout, in ſuch a manner, that we firſt read the Hebrew, and then the Chaldee, verſe by verſe alternately: in the metrical books, which were divided into lines or verſes, the text and verſion were ſo confounded, that the writer attending only to the equality of his lines, perpetually blended the Hebrew and Chaldee together in ſuch a manner, that where the one ended the other was reſumed, and every line partook of both. This is a very elegant copy, and probably five hundred years old. The punctuation is evidently of a more recent date; as in that of the Vatican abovementioned, and in ſome other copies ſtill older. *Author's Note.*

[5] Preface to Chron.

[6] Epiſt. clv. ad Paulam Urbicam.

opinion

opinion he appeals to the teſtimony of Philo, Joſephus, Origen, and Euſebius; who were no leſs ignorant of the nature of the Hebrew metres than himſelf. Notwithſtanding the opinion therefore of Jerome and the Rabbinical writers, I ſhall beg leave to offer a few remarks upon the other ſide of the queſtion; after which it will not perhaps be thought altogether improbable, that moſt of the predictions of the prophets, as well as many other of the remains of Hebrew literature, were originally publiſhed in a metrical form.

In order to prove that the predictions of the prophets are metrical, I muſt in part have recourſe to the ſame arguments, by which I formerly endeavoured to evince that the Hebrew poetry in general conſiſted of a kind of metre: every one of which arguments, I muſt obſerve, is ſtrictly applicable to this part of my ſubject, that alone excepted which regards the alphabetic poems. That it would be unnatural and abſurd to look for inſtances of that kind in the prophetic poetry is evident; ſince ſuch an artificial arrangement would be utterly repug-

[7] See JEROME, preface to Job.

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nant to the nature of prophecy; it is plainly the effect of ſtudy and diligence, not of imagination and enthuſiaſm; a contrivance to aſſiſt the memory, not to affect the paſſions. The other arguments, however, ought to be particularly adverted to upon this ſubject: the poetic dialect for inſtance, the diction ſo totally different from the language of common life, and other ſimilar circumſtances [8], which an attentive reader will eaſily diſcover, but which cannot be explained by a few examples; for circumſtances which, taken ſeparately, appear but of ſmall account, are in a united view frequently of the greateſt importance. To theſe we may add the artificial conformation of the ſentences; which, as it has always appeared to me a neceſſary concomitant of metrical compoſition, the only one indeed which is now apparent, I ſhall afterwards endeavour to explain more at large, having eſpecial regard to the prophetic writers. I muſt now premiſe a few other arguments, which will probably lead to the eſtabliſhment of my opinion.

The prophets were choſen by God himſelf, and were certainly excellently prepared for

[8] See LECT. III.

the execution of their office. They were in general taken from thoſe, who had been educated from childhood in a courſe of diſcipline adapted to the miniſterial function. It is evident from many parts of the Sacred Hiſtory, that even from the earlieſt times of the Hebrew Republic, there exiſted certain colleges of prophets, in which the candidates for the prophetic office, removed altogether from an intercourſe with the world, devoted themſelves entirely to the exerciſes and ſtudy of religion: over each of theſe ſome prophet of ſuperior authority, and more peculiarly under the divine influence, preſided, as the moderator and preceptor of the whole aſſembly. Though the Sacred Hiſtory affords us but little information, and that in a curſory manner, concerning their inſtitutes and diſcipline; we nevertheleſs underſtand that a principal part of their occupation conſiſted in celebrating the praiſes of Almighty God in hymns and poetry, with choral chants accompanied by ſtringed inſtruments and pipes. There is a remarkable paſſage[9] which occurs to this purpoſe: Saul being nominated King, and, purſuant to the command of God, con-

[9] 1 SAM. x. 5—10.

ſecrated

ſecrated by a ſolemn unction, a company of the prophets, as Samuel had foretold, deſcending from the Mount of God (that being the place in which the ſacred college was ſituated) met him; and, preceded by a variety of muſical inſtruments, *propheſied*: upon hearing which, he himſelf, as if actuated by the ſame ſpirit, immediately joined them, and propheſied alſo. The ſame thing again occurred to him, and the perſons ſent by him to take David priſoner at Naioth [10]; who, when they ſaw the prophets propheſying, and Samuel preſiding over them, ſeized with the ſame divine ſpirit and enthuſiaſm, began to propheſy along with them. I find no diſcordance among authors concerning the nature of this mode of propheſying: all are, I believe, agreed in this point, and all underſtand by it the praiſes of God celebrated, by the impulſe of the Holy Spirit, with muſic and ſong. In this they follow the authority of the Chaldee interpreters, or rather the evidence of reaſon itſelf: for exactly in the ſame manner, Aſaph, Heman, Iduthun, who were the chief muſicians in the Temple, are ſaid "to have propheſied upon the harp, the

[10] 1 SAM. xix. 20—24.

"pſaltery,

" pſaltery, and the cymbal, when praiſe and " thankſgiving were offered to Jehovah." From theſe inſtances it is full as apparent, that the word *Nabi* was uſed by the Hebrews in an ambiguous ſenſe and that it equally denoted a Prophet, a Poet, or a Muſician, under the influence of divine inſpiration. To theſe we may add the propheteſſes, Miriam the ſiſter of Aaron, and Deborah, who were diſtinguiſhed by that title, not only becauſe they pronounced the oracles of Jehovah, but on account of their excellence in muſic and poetry; for theſe ſiſter arts were united by the Hebrews, as well as by all other nations, during the firſt ſtages of ſociety. After theſe proofs there can ſcarcely be any occaſion to remark, that Solomon, or at leaſt the editor or compiler of his proverbs, twice makes uſe of the word, which, in its ordinary ſenſe, means prophecy, ſtrictly ſo called, to denote the language of poetry. For he calls the words of Agur and Lemuel [12]

Maſſa,

[11] 1 CHRON. xxv. 1—3.

[12] The late Mr. Hallet of Exeter, in the ſecond volume of his Notes and Diſcourſes, p. 89, &c. hath advanced enough to ſhew that the exiſtence of the two perſonages

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Maſſa[13], which Jerome renders *viſion*, the ſeventy Greek tranſlators *an oracle*, the Chaldee *prophecy*: when in reality thoſe paſſages have nothing in them which can be properly ſaid to bear any reſemblance to prophecy; but are mere rhapſodies of morality, ornament-

here mentioned is at leaſt problematical. To the reputation of this excellent man (and perhaps it was his leaſt praiſe) it deſerves to be mentioned, that there is ſcarcely a conjectural emendation of the Hebrew text propoſed by him, which was not afterwards found by Dr. Kennicot, in one manuſcript or another, to have been an ancient reading. S. H.

[13] *Maſſa*, which according to its etymology means *an oracular ſaying*, λογιον, is no more peculiar to predictions of future events, than to every ſpecies of that eloquence which is ſuppoſed to come by inſpiration, including that which teaches the ſalutary principles of moral conduct. I do not therefore ſee much force in this argument of our author: for whatever Lemuel compoſed under the influence of the Divine Spirit might properly be called *maſſa*, whether in verſe or not. The word is derived from *naſa*, he raiſed, he produced, he ſpoke; not as ſome of the old commentators derive it, from *naſa*, he received. Though a divine oracle might, I confeſs, take its name with great propriety from *receiving*, as does the Greek word ρημα (ſo the Seventy render this very phraſe) which means being *received* from God. But the uſe of the word in 2 KINGS ix. 25. militates againſt this derivation. M.

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ed indeed with the uſual embelliſhments of poetry [14]. The Hebrews certainly did not expreſs by the ſame word ideas, which they deemed inconſiſtent, or repugnant to each other; and, what is remarkable, the ſame ambiguity prevails, the ſame word (and we may well preſume for ſimilar reaſons) denotes both a Prophet and a Poet in the Arabic language, in the Greek, and in the Latin [15].

Nor is it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that Prophecy admitted Poetry and Muſic to a participation in the name alone; on the contrary we find, that ſhe did not diſdain to unite herſelf with Harmony, and to accept of her aſſiſtance. The example of Eliſha is remarkable [16], who, when about to pronounce the anſwer of the Moſt High to the inquiry of the two kings of Iſrael and Judah, orders a minſtrel to be brought to him, and upon

[14] PROV. xxx. 1. xxxi. 1. See alſo 1 CHRON. xv. 22. and 27. שר המשא; αρχων των ωδων, lxx.

[15] *Muttenabbi*, Προφητης, Vates. See JOSEPH MEDE's Works, p. 59. TIT. i. 12. LUKE i. 67. and HAMMOND on the paſſage. *Author's Note.*

[16] 2 KINGS iii. 15.

his

his ſtriking the harp, is immediately agitated by the Holy Spirit [17]. Many commentators have indeed ſuppoſed that the Prophet applied to muſic only to ſooth the perturbation of his mind; in this they follow an opinion of ſome of the more modern Rabbies (an opinion, it may be obſerved, by no means ſatisfactorily proved) that every emotion of a more vehement kind excluded the Holy Spirit, and conſequently was totally inconſiſtent with prophecy [18]; when, on the contrary, we learn from the teſtimony of the Prophets themſelves, that the act of propheſying was often, if not always, accompanied with a very violent agitation of the mind [19]. Be this as it may, I am inclined to believe, both from this laſt and the other inſtances, that the Prophet himſelf accompanied the minſtrel, and uttered ſome hymn, or rather the prediction itſelf, to the muſic of the harp; and both the ſtyle and

[17] והיה בנגן המנגן ותהי עליו יד יהוה

[18] See MAIMON. *More Neboc.* ii. 36. and many others quoted by SMITH, *Diſſert. of Prophecy*, c. viii.

[19] See JER. xxiii. 9. EZEK. iii. 14, 15. DAN. vii. 28. x. 8. HABAK. iii. 2, and 16.

the form of this prophetic reply are very much in favour of this opinion [20].

From all theſe teſtimonies it is ſufficiently evident, that the prophetic office had a moſt ſtrict connexion with the poetic art. They had one common name, one common origin, one common author, the Holy Spirit. Thoſe in particular were called to the exerciſe of the prophetic office, who were previouſly converſant with the ſacred poetry. It was equally a part of their duty to compoſe verſes for the ſervice of the church, and to declare the oracles of God: it cannot, therefore, be doubted that a great portion of the ſacred hymns may properly be termed prophecies, or that many of the prophecies are in reality hymns or poems. Since, as we have already proved, it was from the firſt a principal end and aim of poetry, to impreſs upon the minds of men the ſayings of the wiſe, and ſuch precepts as related either to the principles of faith, or the laws of morality, as well as to tranſmit the ſame to poſterity; it ought not

[20] Dryden, in the adjuſtment of his meaſures, and Handel of his muſic, to the diverſified ſtrains of Timotheus, ſeem both to have poſſeſſed the ſame idea. S. H.

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to appear extraordinary, that prophecy, which in this view ranks as a principal, and is of the higheſt importance, ſhould not diſdain the aſſiſtance of an art ſo admirably calculated to effect its purpoſes. Of this we have an illuſtrious proof in that prophetic ode of Moſes [21], which he compoſed by the eſpecial command of God, to be learned by the Iſraelites, and committed to memory: "That this ſong may be," ſays God himſelf, "for a witneſs againſt the people of "Iſrael, when they ſhall depart from me; "this ſhall be a teſtimony in their mouths; "for it ſhall not be forgotten, nor ſhall it "depart out of the mouths of their poſte-"rity for ever [22]."

But, as on the one hand, this poem of Moſes is a clear and remarkable ſpecimen of the prophetic mode of writing; ſo, on the other, there are many prophecies which are not leſs conſpicuous as poems. It remains, therefore, only to produce a few examples from the prophetic writings. Many of the moſt ancient of thoſe, which are extant in

[21] DEUT. xxxii.

[22] See DEUT. xxxi. 19, 21.

the Moſaic hiſtory, I have already quoted [23], as exhibiting the faireſt examples of the Hebrew poetry: for inſtance, the imprecation of Noah, the bleſſing of Jacob, and the predictions of Balaam: than all which (and particularly thoſe of Balaam) I do not know that the whole extent of the prophetic writings could afford more pertinent inſtances. Nay, ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed are they by all the characteriſtics of poetry, that thoſe who are inclined to acknowledge any kind of metre in the Hebrew poetry, muſt, I am convinced, refer to theſe as metrical compoſitions, if they be in the leaſt deſirous of maintaining their opinion by fact and argument. Among the prophecies of Balaam I will alſo venture to claſs that moſt elegant poem, which is reſcued from oblivion by the prophet Micah [24], and which in matter and diction, in the ſtructure, form, and character of the compoſition, ſo admirably agrees with the other monuments of his fame, that it evidently appears to be a citation from the

[23] See LECT. IV.

[24] MIC. vi. 6—8.

anſwer

anſwer of Balaam to the king of the Moabites [25]:

" Wherewith ſhall I come before JEHOVAH?
" Wherewith ſhall I bow myſelf unto the High
" God?
" Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings;
" With calves of a year old?
" Will JEHOVAH be pleaſed with thouſands of
" rams?
" With ten thouſands of rivers of oil?
" Shall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion?
" The fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?
" He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good:
" And what doth JEHOVAH require of thee,
" But to do juſtice, and to love mercy,
" And to be humble in walking with thy God?"

But if we proceed to other parts of the Sacred Hiſtory, examples will not be wanting: and among the firſt of theſe is that Cygnean ſong of Moſes, as it may properly be called; I do not ſpeak of the prophetic ode, which has frequently been diſtinguiſhed by that title, but of the laſt bleſſing of that divine Prophet, in which are predicted the future fortunes of the Iſraelites:

[25] See MIC. vi. 5. and the late Biſhop BUTLER's Sermon on the character of Balaam.

" Jehovah came from Sinai:"
" And roſe up unto them from Seir:"—[26]

The prophecy is evidently of the ſame nature with that of Jacob; both in the exordium and the concluſion it is exquiſitely ſublime; and throughout the whole affords an admirable ſpecimen of the prophetic poetry. In the ſame claſs with theſe may be ranked the anſwer of Samuel the prophet to Saul, in which he reproaches him with his diſobedience and contumacy, and denounces againſt him the Divine decree of expulſion from his kingdom, it conſiſts of four diſtichs elegantly correſponding to each other.

" Hath Jehovah pleaſure in burnt-offerings and
" ſacrifices,
" As in liſtening to the voice of Jehovah?
" Behold! to liſten is better than ſacrifice,
" And to obey than the fat of rams.
" Rebellion is as the ſin of divination,
" And contempt as the crime of idolatry.
" Becauſe thou haſt rejected the word of Je-
" hovah,
" He hath alſo rejected thee from being king[27]."

[26] Deut. xxxiii.

[27] 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. All the old tranſlators ſeem to have read ותקשיב for להקשיב, and חרפים without ו prefixed.

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The laſt words of David [28] afford an evident and illuſtrious inſtance to the ſame purpoſe, however difficult and obſcure the verbal interpretation of the prophecy may be. I apprehend the examples from Sacred Hiſtory will appear ſufficiently numerous, if I add the prediction of Iſaiah concerning Senacherib, which is inſerted in the book of Kings:

" He hath deſpiſed thee, he hath mocked thee,
" O virgin daughter of Sion;
" He hath ſhaken his head at thee, O daughter
" of Jeruſalem [29]."

The ſame paſſage occurs again among the predictions of the Prophet: and this reminds me that it is now full time to paſs from the hiſtorians to the books of the prophets themſelves, which will afford us abundant inſtances to demonſtrate that the compoſitions of the prophets are truly poetical, and at the ſame time to illuſtrate the nature of their poetry.

[28] 2 SAM. xxiii. 1—7.

[29] 2 KINGS xix. 21—34. ISA. xxxvii. 22—35.

LECTURE XIX.

THE PROPHETIC POETRY IS SENTENTIOUS.

The pſalmody of the Hebrews.—The manner of chanting the hymns by alternate choirs: whence the origin of the poetical conſtruction of the ſentences, and that peculiar form, in which verſes and diſtichs run parallel or correſpondent to each other.—Three ſpecies of paralleliſm; the ſynonymous, the antithetic, and the ſynthetic: examples of each, firſt from the books generally allowed to be poetical, and afterwards from the writings of the prophets.—The ſentiments of R. Azarias conſidered.—The great importance of an accurate attention to this poetical conformation of the ſentences.

THE origin and earlieſt application of the Hebrew poetry have, I think, been clearly traced into the ſervice of religion. To celebrate in hymns and ſongs the praiſes of Almighty God; to decorate the worſhip of the Moſt High with all the charms and graces of harmony; to give force and energy to the devout affections was the ſublime employment of the Sacred Muſe. It is more than probable, that the very early uſe of ſacred muſic in the public worſhip of the Hebrews, contributed not a little to the peculiar

peculiar character of their poetry, and might impart to it that appropriate form, which, though chiefly adapted to this particular purpoſe, it nevertheleſs preſerves on every other occaſion. But in order to explain this matter more clearly, it will be neceſſary to premiſe a few obſervations concerning the ancient Hebrew mode of chanting their ſacred hymns.

Though we are rather at a loſs for information, reſpecting the uſual manner and ceremony of chanting their poems; and though the ſubject of their ſacred muſic in general be involved in doubt and obſcurity, thus far at leaſt is evident from many examples, that the ſacred hymns were alternately ſung by oppoſite choirs [1], and that the one choir uſually performed the hymn itſelf, while the other ſung a particular diſtich, which was regularly interpoſed at ſtated intervals, either of the nature of the proaſm or epode of the Greeks. In this manner we learn that Moſes with the Iſraelites chanted the ode at the Red-ſea; for "Miriam the "propheteſs took a timbrel in her hand,

[1] See NEHEM. xii. 24, 31, 38, 40. and the title of PSAL. lxxxviii.

"and

" and all the women followed her with tim-
" brels, and with dances; and Miriam an-
" ſwered them," that is, ſhe and the women ſung the reſponſe to the chorus of men [2];

" Sing to JEHOVAH, for he is greatly exalted;
" The horſe and the rider he hath caſt into the
" ſea."

The ſame is obſervable in ſome of the Pſalms, which are compoſed in this form. The muſical performance was on ſome occaſions differently conducted: for inſtance, one of the choirs ſung a ſingle verſe to the other, while the other conſtantly added a verſe in ſome reſpect correſpondent to the former. Of this the following diſtich is an example,

" Sing praiſes to JEHOVAH, for he is good;
" Becauſe his mercy endureth for ever:"

which Ezra [3] informs us was ſung by the Prieſts and Levites in alternate choirs at the command of David; as indeed may be collected from the Pſalm itſelf [4], in which the

[2] EXOD. xv. 20, 21. See PHILO περι γεωργιας, pag. 199. alſo περι βιε θεωρητικε, pag. 902. Edit. Paris, 1640.

[3] EZR. iii. 11.

[4] Ps. cxxxvi.

latter verſe, ſung by the latter choir, forms a perpetual epode. Of the ſame nature is the ſong of the women concerning Saul and David[5], for "the women who played an- "ſwered one another;" that is, they chant- ed in two choirs the alternate ſong[6], the one choir ſinging,

Saul

[5] 1 SAM. xviii. 7.

[6] It is much to be regretted, that the learned author has not inveſtigated this ſubject more *fully*, and with his uſual preciſion.——Though the performance of their Hymns by TWO, *alternate*, CHOIRS, was the more uſual, it evidently was not the only mode: for, as the parallelism of ſentences in the Hebrew poetry is not re- ſtricted to diſtichs, but admits a varied form of iteration, ſo their pſalmody, though uſually confined to two alter- nate choruſes, was ſometimes extended to more. An example of the latter kind will appear in Pſalm cxxxv. which was obviouſly performed by THREE *different* CHOIRS, the High-prieſt with the Houſe of Aaron conſtituting the *firſt*; the Levites ſerving in the temple, the *ſecond*; and the Congregation of Iſrael, the *third*; all having their *diſtinct* parts, and all at ſtated intervals *uniting* in full chorus.

The High-prieſt, accompanied by the reſt of the prieſt- hood, began with addreſſing the Levites:

Praiſe ye Jah!

The Levites return the exhortation to the Prieſts:

Praiſe ye the name Jehovah!

The

" Saul hath ſmote his thouſands,"

The

The Prieſts and Levites then joining, addreſs the Congregation:

Praiſe him, O ye ſervants of Jehovah!

The Congregation addreſs the Prieſts——

Ye that ſtand in the houſe of Jehovah!

And the Levites——

In the courts of the houſe of our God!

This may be conſidered as the firſt paſſus of the προσομα, which the *Choir of Prieſts* reſumes by a ſecond exhortation to the *Levites*, and aſſigning the reaſon for their praiſe:

Praiſe ye Jah, for Jehovah is good.

The Levites then exhort the Congregation:

Sing praiſes unto his name, for it is pleaſant.

And the Congregation joining both, the three choirs unite in full chorus:

For Jah hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf:
Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.

The προσομα thus concluding, the *High-prieſt*, followed by his band, commences in the 5th verſe the Hymn. The 6th verſe belongs to the *Levites*, and the 7th to the *Congregation*, both whom having, in them, celebrated Jehovah, as the *Creator* and *Governor* of the world, the *High-prieſt* deſcends in the 8th verſe to the interpoſitions of Jehovah in behalf of his choſen people; beginning with the miracle that procured their deliverance from bondage. The *Levites* having adverted to the other miracles wrought in Ægypt, in the former clauſe of the 9th verſe, and the *Congregation*, in the latter, pointed out Pharaoh

and

The other anſwering,

" And David his ten thouſands."

In

and his ſervants, as thoſe upon whom they, the judgments of Jehovah, were inflicted, the *High-prieſt*, &c. proceeds in the 10th verſe, to remark the extenſion of ſimilar judgments to other nations and kings, whoſe names and kingdoms the *Levites* enumerate, in the 11th verſe, whilſt the *Congregation*, in the 12th, commemorate the bleſſings which had thence reſulted to them. At the cloſe of this recitative, in the firſt clauſe of the 13th verſe, follows a chorus of the Prieſts:

Thy name, O Jehovah! endureth for ever!

And in the ſecond, another, of the Levites:

Thy memorial, O Jehovah! throughout all generations.

The Congregation then ſtriking in with Prieſts and Levites, all unite in full chorus, as before:

For Jehovah will judge his people:
And will repent him concerning his ſervants.

This chorus may be conſidered as cloſing the firſt part of the Hymn, the concluding clauſe of which adverting to the frequent backſlidings of the Jewiſh nation, notwithſtanding the bleſſings both *ordinary* and *extraordinary* which Jehovah had conferred upon them, and the proſperity they enjoyed in the land promiſed to their forefathers, notwithſtanding their turning aſide to the idolatry of the nations that had been cut off from before them, the choir of *Prieſts* (referring back to the 5th verſe) as if aſſured that Iſrael could revolt no more, breaks out in a ſecond

In the very ſame manner Iſaiah deſcribes the

cond recitative, expreſſive at once of exultation, and contempt:

The idols of the Heathen, ſilver and gold, &c.

To this the Levites add in the ſame indignant ſtrain:

They have mouths, but they ſpeak not, &c.

The Congregation ſubjoin:

They have ears, but they hear not, &c.

And the three choirs again uniting:

They that make them are like unto them:
Every one that truſteth in them.

With this exquiſite contraſt between the Gods in whom the Heathen confided, and Jehovah the rock of their ſalvation—the former unable to aid or hear their votaries, and the latter loading benefits on his own—the ſecond part of the Hymn is concluded, and the High-prieſt with his choir, by a graceful tranſition, renews his exhortation as at firſt; but now addreſſing the Congregation:

Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Iſrael!

To which the Congregation reply:

Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Aaron!

The Prieſts, in like manner, exhorting the Levites:

Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Levi!

To whom they in their turn rejoin:

Ye that fear Jehovah, bleſs Jehovah!

All then uniting:

Bleſſed be Jehovah out of Sion!
Who dwelleth in Jeruſalem!

The

the Seraphim chanting the praiſe of Jehovah [7]: "they cried alternately,

"Holy, holy, holy, JEHOVAH God of Hoſts!
"The whole earth is filled with his glory."

From the Jewiſh, the cuſtom of ſinging in alternate chorus was tranſmitted to the Chriſtian Church, and was continued in the latter from the firſt ages, it was called "alter-"nate or reſponſive [8]," when the whole choir ſeparated into two diviſions ſung the Pſalm alternately by ſtrophes; and when this was done by ſingle verſes, or lines, that is

The whole is cloſed by each choir in full chorus, exhorting the other two:

Praiſe ye, Jah!

From this analyſis it is evident, that the Hebrew Hymn is a compoſition not leſs regular than the Grecian Ode, and of a much more varied nature than the Profeſſor had led his audience to ſuppoſe. S. H.

The reader will find the Pſalm in an entire ſtate, but divided and apportioned according to the above ſpecimen in the Appendix.

[7] Is. vi. 3. See what Socrates relates of the origin of the ancient hymns. *Hiſt. Eccl.* vi. 8.

[8] PLIN. Lib. x. Epiſt. 97.—"They repeat alternate "verſes to Chriſt, as to a God."

when

when the ſame diviſion of the choir always ſung the latter part of the diſtich, they were ſaid to ſing the choral reſponſe [9].

Now if this were the ancient and primitive mode of chanting their hymns, as indeed appears highly probable, the proximate cauſe will be eaſily explained, why poems of this kind are diſpoſed in equal ſtanzas, indeed in equal diſtichs, for the moſt part; and why theſe diſtichs ſhould in ſome meaſure conſiſt of verſicles or paralleliſms [10] correſponding to each other. And this mode of compoſition being admirably adapted to the muſical modulation of that kind of poetry, which was moſt in uſe among them from the very beginning, and at the ſame time being perfectly agreeable to the genius

[9] See BINGHAM's Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church, xiv. 1.

[10] "The correſpondence of one verſe, or line, with "another, I call *paralleliſm*. When a propoſition is de- "livered, and a ſecond is ſubjoined to it, or drawn under "it, equivalent, or contraſted with it, in ſenſe; or ſi- "milar to it in the form of grammatical conſtruction; "theſe I call parallel lines; and the words or phraſes, an- "ſwering one to another in the correſponding lines, pa- "rallel terms." LOWTH's *Prelim. Diſc. to Iſaiah*, p. 10.

and cadence of the language, eaſily extended itſelf into the other ſpecies of poetry, though not deſigned for the ſame purpoſe; in fact, we find that it pervaded the whole of the poetry of the Hebrews; inſomuch, that what was ſaid of the Heathen Muſes may ſtill more ſtrictly be applied to thoſe of the Hebrews,—"they love alternate ſong." On this occaſion alſo it may not be improper to remark, that the word *gnanah*, which properly ſignifies to anſwer, is uſed more generally to denote any ſong or poem [11]; whence we can only infer, either that the word has paſſed from particular to general uſe, or that among the Hebrews almoſt every poem poſſeſſes a ſort of reſponſive form.

Such appears to have been the origin and progreſs of that poetical and artificial conformation of the ſentences, which we obſerve in the poetry of the Hebrews. That it prevailed no leſs in the Prophetic Poetry than in the Lyric and Didactic, to which it was, in the nature of things, moſt adapted,

[11] EXOD. xxxii. 18. NUM. xxi. 17. HOS. ii. 15. Ps. cxlvii. 7. "Thus the word which in the Arabic "anſwers to *gnanah*, denotes not only to *perform alternately*, but alſo *to ſing*." H.

is evident from thoſe very ancient ſpecimens of poetical prophecy already quoted from the hiſtorical books; and it only remains to ſhew, that it is no leſs obſervable in thoſe which are contained in the volumes of the prophets themſelves. In order the more clearly to evince this point, I ſhall endeavour to illuſtrate the Hebrew paralleliſm according to its different ſpecies, firſt by examples taken from thoſe books commonly allowed to be poetical, and afterwards by correſpondent examples from the books of the prophets.

The poetical conformation of the ſentences, which has been ſo often alluded to as characteriſtic of the Hebrew poetry, conſiſts chiefly in a certain equality, reſemblance, or paralleliſm between the members of each period; ſo that in two lines (or members of the ſame period) things for the moſt part ſhall anſwer to things, and words to words, as if fitted to each other by a kind of rule or meaſure. This paralleliſm has much variety and many gradations; it is ſometimes more accurate and manifeſt, ſometimes more vague and obſcure: it may however, on the whole, be ſaid to conſiſt of three ſpecies.

The

The firſt ſpecies is the ſynonymous paralleliſm, when the ſame ſentiment is repeated in different, but equivalent terms. This is the moſt frequent of all, and is often conducted with the utmoſt accuracy and neatneſs: examples are very numerous, nor will there be any great difficulty in the choice of them: on this account I ſhall ſelect ſuch as are moſt remarkable in other reſpects.

" When Iſrael went out from Egypt;
" The houſe of Jacob from a ſtrange people:
" Judah was as his ſacred heritage:
" Iſrael his dominion.
" The ſea ſaw, and fled;
" Jordan turned back:
" The mountains leaped like rams;
" The hills like the ſons of the flock.
" What ailed thee, O Sea, that thou fleddeſt;
" Jordan, that thou turnedſt back:
" Mountains, that ye leaped like rams;
" And hills, like the ſons of the flock?
" At the preſence of the Lord tremble thou Earth;
" At the preſence of the God of Jacob!
" Who turned the rock into a lake of waters;
" The flint into a water ſpring [12]."

[12] Ps. cxiv.

The Prophetic Muſe is no leſs elegant and correct:

" Ariſe, be thou enlightened; for thy light is
" come;
" And the glory of Jehovah is riſen upon thee.
" For behold darkneſs ſhall cover the earth;
" And a thick vapour the nations:
" But upon thee ſhall Jehovah ariſe;
" And his glory upon thee ſhall be conſpicuous.
" And the nations ſhall walk in thy light;
" And kings in the brightneſs of thy riſing [13]."

Obſerve alſo that famous prophecy concerning the humiliation, and expiatory ſufferings of the Meſſiah:

" Who hath believed our report;
" And to whom hath the arm of Jehovah been
" manifeſted:
" For he groweth up in their ſight like a tender
" ſucker;
" And like a root from a thirſty ſoil;
" He hath no form, nor any beauty that we
" ſhould regard him;

[13] Isai. lx. 1—3. " In the brightneſs of thy riſing," is an expreſſion uncommonly beautiful and ſimple; I never could read it without a glow of tranquil pleaſure correſponding to the ſcene which the image exhibits. T.

" Nor

" Nor is his countenance ſuch, that we ſhould
" deſire him.
" Deſpiſed, nor accounted in the number of men;
" A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief;
" As one that hideth his face from us:
" He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.
" Surely our infirmities he hath borne.
" And our ſorrows he [14] hath carried them.——
" Yet we thought him judicially ſtricken;
" Smitten of God and afflicted.
" But he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions;
" Was ſmitten for our iniquities:
" The chaſtiſement by which our peace was ef-
" fected was laid upon him;
" And by his bruiſes we are healed [15]."

Iſaiah is indeed excellent, but not unrivalled in this kind of compoſition: there are abundant examples in the other prophets; I ſhall, however, only add one from Hoſea, which is exquiſitely pathetic.

[14] Some copies, manuſcript as well as printed, point out in the margin the word הוּא (*he*) to be inſerted: (ſee Bibl. Heb. Edit. MICHAELIS, Var. Lect. in loc.) The SYR. and VULG. certainly expreſs it, and indeed the repetition of the word gives exquiſite force and elegance to the line. " This word occurs in the text of twelve MSS. " copies, and in three printed." K. *Author's Note.*

[15] ISAI. liii. 1—5.

" How ſhall I reſign thee, O Ephraim!
" How ſhall I deliver thee up, O Iſrael!
" How ſhall I reſign thee as Admah!
" How ſhall I make thee as Zeboim!
" My heart is changed within me;
" I am warmed alſo with repentance towards
" thee.
" I will not do according to the fervour of my
" wrath,
" I will not return [16] to deſtroy Ephraim:
" For I am God, and not man;
" [17] Holy in the midſt of thee, though I inhabit
" not thy cities [17]."

There

[16] A beautiful Hebraiſm to expreſs the repetition of any thing; in this place it has peculiar force and pathos. T.

[17] There is hardly any thing in which tranſlators have differed more than in the explanation of this line; which is the more extraordinary when we conſider that the words themſelves are ſo well known, and the ſtructure of the period ſo plain and evident. Jerome is almoſt ſingular in his explanation. *Comm. in loc.* " I am not one of thoſe " who inhabit cities; who live according to human " laws; who think cruelty juſtice." Castalio follows Jerome. There is in fact in the latter member of the ſentence לא אבוא בעיר a paralleliſm and ſynonyme to לא איש in the former. The future אבוא has a frequentative power (ſee Ps. xxii. 3 and 8.) " I am not accuſtomed to " enter a city; I am not an inhabitant of a city." For there is a beautiful oppoſition of the different parts; " I

" am

There is great variety in the form of the ſynonymous paralleliſm, ſome inſtances of which are deſerving of remark. The paralleliſm is ſometimes formed by the iteration of the former member, either in the whole or in part:

" Much have they oppreſſed me from my youth
" up,
" May Iſrael now ſay;
" Much have they oppreſſed me from my youth,
" Yet have they not prevailed againſt me [19]."

" God of vengeance, JEHOVAH;
" God of vengeance, ſhew thyſelf.
" How long ſhall the wicked, O JEHOVAH,
" How long ſhall the wicked triumph [20]!"

" With the jaw-bone of an aſs, heaps upon heaps;
" With the jaw-bone of an aſs a thouſand men
" have I ſmitten [21]."

Thus

" am God and not man;" this is amplified in the next line, and the antitheſis a little varied. " I am thy God, " inhabiting with thee, but in a peculiar and extraor- " dinary manner, not in the manner of men." Nothing I think can be plainer or more elegant than this.

Author's Note.

[18] Hos. xi. 8, 9. [19] Pſ. cxxix. 1, 2.

[20] Pſ. xciv. 1 and 3.

[21] JUD. xv. 16. " It will admit of a doubt whether " theſe words may not be rendered: *With the jaw-bone of*

Thus, Iſaiah:

" Becauſe in the night Ar is deſtroyed, Moab is
" undone!
" Becauſe in the night Kir is deſtroyed, Moab is
" undone [22]."

So Nahum alſo in the exordium of his ſublime prophecy:

" Jehovah is a jealous and avenging God;
" Jehovah avengeth, and is wrathful:

" *an aſs, in confuſing, I have confuſed them.* For this ſeems " to be the grammatical conſtruction of the words: and " the word *Chamar* commonly ſignifies to *trouble* or *con-* " *fuſe.* So it is rendered by the LXX, Εν σιαγονι ονου εξαλειφων " εξηλειψα αυλες, *With the jaw-bone of an aſs, in exterminat-* " *ing, I have exterminated them,* following the ſame con- " ſtruction, but taking the more violent ſenſe of the " word, *deſtroying,* or *exterminating*; which ſenſe it ſtill " retains in the Arabic, for in that language it ſignifies " not only to *trouble* or *diſturb,* but alſo to *overwhelm* or " *ſuppreſs.* But if in favour of the other interpretation, " which is alſo adopted in our common tranſlation, the " paſſage in Exod. viii. 14. be referred to (*chomarim,* " *chomarim,* in heaps); it may be ſaid in anſwer, that the " words in theſe two paſſages aſſume a different form. " The verb *chamar* in this place ſeems moſt directly ſuited " to expreſs tumult and confuſion, and is alſo introduced " for the ſake of the paronomaſia, and the ſimilarity of " ſound with the preceding word *chamor, an aſs.*" H.

[22] Chap. xv. 1.

" JEHOVAH avengeth his adverſaries;
" And he reſerveth *indignation* for his enemies[23]."

There is frequently ſomething wanting in the latter member, which muſt be repeated from the former to complete the ſentence:

" The king ſent and releaſed him;
" The ruler of the people, and ſet him free[24]."

In the ſame manner Iſaiah:

" Kings ſhall ſee him and ſhall riſe up;
" Princes, and they ſhall worſhip him:
" For the ſake of JEHOVAH, who is faithful;
" Of the Holy One of Iſrael, for he hath choſen
" thee[25]."

Frequently the whole of the latter diviſion anſwers only to ſome part of the former:

" JEHOVAH reigneth, let the earth rejoice;
" Let the multitude of iſlands be glad[26]."

" Ariſe, be thou enlightened; for thy light is
" come;
" And the glory of JEHOVAH is riſen upon thee[27]."

[23] NAH. i. 2. [24] Ps. cv. 20.
[25] ISAI. xlix. 7. [26] Ps. xcvii. 1.
[27] ISAI. lx. 1.

Some-

Sometimes alſo there are triplet paralleliſms. In theſe the ſecond line is generally ſynonymous with the firſt, whilſt the third either begins the period, or concludes it, and frequently refers to both the preceding:

" The floods have liſted up, O JEHOVAH,
" The floods have lifted up their voice;
" The floods have lifted up their waves.
" Than the voice of many waters,
" The glorious waves of the ſea,
" JEHOVAH on high is more glorious[28]."

" Come and let us return unto JEHOVAH;
" For he hath torn, and he will heal us;
" He hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up:
" After two days he will revive us;
" On the third day he will raiſe us up;
" And we ſhall live in his ſight[29]."

In ſtanzas (if I may ſo call them) of five lines, the nature of which is nearly ſimilar, the line that is not parallel is generally placed between the two diſtichs:

" Like as the lion growleth,
" Even the young lion over his prey;
" Though the whole company of ſhepherds be
" called together againſt him:

[28] Pſ. xciii. 3, 4. [29] Hos. vi. 1, 2.

At

" At their voice he will not be terrified,
" Nor at their tumult will he be humbled [30]."

" Aſkalon ſhall ſee it, and ſhall fear;
" Gaza ſhall alſo ſee it, and ſhall be greatly
" pained:
" And Ekron ſhall be pained, becauſe her ex-
" pectation is put to ſhame;
" And the king ſhall periſh from Gaza;
" And Aſkalon ſhall not be inhabited [31]."

Thoſe which conſiſt of four lines generally form two regular diſtichs; but there is ſometimes a peculiar artifice to be perceived in the diſtribution of the ſentences:

" From the Heavens JEHOVAH looketh down,
" He ſeeth all the children of men;
" From the ſeat of his reſt he contemplateth
" All the inhabitants of the earth [32]."

" I will drench my arrows in blood,
" And my ſword ſhall devour fleſh;
" In the blood of the ſlain and the captives;
" From the buſhy head of the enemies [33]."

In both the above paſſages, the latter members are to be alternately referred to the former.

[30] ISAI. xxxi. 4.
[31] ZECH. ix. 5.
[32] PS. xxxiii. 13, 14.
[33] DEUT. xxxii. 42.

mer. Iſaiah too uſes with great elegance this form of compoſition:

" For thy huſband is thy maker;
" Jehovah God of Hoſts is his name:
" And thy redeemer is the Holy One of Iſrael;
" The God of the whole earth ſhall he be
" called [34]."

The ſenſe has an alternate correſpondence in theſe lines. In the following the form of the conſtruction is alternate:

" And his land is filled with ſilver and gold;
" And there is no end to his treaſures:
" And his land is filled with horſes,
" Neither is there any end to his chariots [35]."

The following is perhaps a ſingular inſtance:

" Who is like unto Jehovah our God?
" Who is exalted to dwell on high,
" Who humbleth himſelf to look down,
" In the heavens, and in the earth [36]."

Here the two members of the latter line are to be referred ſeverally to the two preceding lines; as if it were: " Who is exalted to

[34] Isai. liv. 5. [35] Isai. ii. 7.
[36] Ps. cxiii. 5, 6.

" dwell

" dwell in the heavens, and who humbleth
" himſelf to inſpect the things that are in
" the earth."

The Antithetic paralleliſm is the next that I ſhall ſpecify, when a thing is illuſtrated by its contrary being oppoſed to it. This is not confined to any particular form: for ſentiments are oppoſed to ſentiments, words to words, ſingulars to ſingulars, plurals to plurals, &c. of which the following are examples:

" The blows of a friend are faithful;
" But the kiſſes of an enemy are treacherous [37].
" The cloyed will trample upon an honey-comb;
" But to the hungry every bitter thing is ſweet.
" There is who maketh himſelf rich, and wanteth
" all things;
" Who maketh himſelf poor, yet hath much
" wealth.

[37] " To this very day the word עתר is in uſe in the
" Eaſt, and in an Arabic Lexicon, which is accounted
" one of the beſt, it is explained by the word ברב (the
" ſame as the Hebrew בוב) to *falſify*. Whence it is evi-
" dent, that there is an antitheſis between the two hemi-
" ſtichs, which the LXX have in vain attempted to ex-
" plain, they have εκουσια, *ſpontaneous* or *voluntary*. They
" ſeem to have read it נעתרות." H.

" The

" The rich man is wiſe in his own eyes,
" But the poor man that hath diſcernment to trace
" him out will deſpiſe him [38]."

There is ſometimes a contrapoſition of parts in the ſame ſentence, ſuch as occurs once in the above; and as appears in the following:

" I am ſwarthy but comely, O daughters of Je-
" ruſalem;
" As the tents of Kedar, as the pavilions of
" Solomon [39]."

The laſt line here is alſo to be divided and ſeparately applied to the preceding, " ſwarthy " as the tents of Kedar; comely as the pa-" vilions of Solomon," ſo likewiſe in the enigma of Sampſon:

" Out of the eater came forth meat;
" And out of the ſtrong came forth ſweetneſs [40]."

This form of compoſition, indeed, agrees beſt with adages and acute ſayings: it is

[38] Prov. xxvii. 6, 7. xiii. 7. xxviii. 11.

[39] Song of Solomon i. 5.

[40] Jud. xiv. 14. The ſolution of the enigma by the Philiſtines is metrical, as well as the anſwer of Sampſon to them. Ib. v. 18. *Author's Note.*

therefore very prevalent in the proverbs of Solomon, in ſome of which the principal force and elegance depend on the exactneſs of the antitheſis. It is not however inconſiſtent with the ſuperior kinds of Hebrew poetry; for we meet with it in the thankſgiving ode of Hannah, which is imitated in this particular, as well as in the general form of its compoſition in that of the Virgin Mary:

" The bows of the mighty are broken;
" And they that ſtumbled are girded with
" ſtrength:
" The full have hired themſelves for bread;
" And the hungry have ceaſed to [41] hunger:
" The barren alſo hath borne ſeven;
" And ſhe who had many children is become
" fruitleſs.
" JEHOVAH killeth and maketh alive;
" He caſteth down to hell, and lifteth up.
" JEHOVAH maketh poor, and maketh rich;
" Depreſſeth, and alſo exalteth [42]."

[41] " There is evidently ſomething wanting after (*Cha-*
" *delu*) *ceaſed*, in order to complete the ſentence. What
" if we take the word *gnad* from the beginning of the
" next verſe, and ſo underſtand it as derived from the
" verb (*gnieved*) *to ſpoil* or *rob?* The ſenſe will then be *the*
" *hungry ceaſed from plundering*, that is, on account of
" their poverty, as in JOB iii. 17." H.

[42] 1 SAM. ii. 4—7. compare LUKE i. 52, 53.

The

The ſublimer poetry ſeldom indeed adopts this ſtyle. Iſaiah, however, by means of it, without departing from his uſual dignity, adds greatly to the ſweetneſs of his compoſition in the following inſtances:

" In a little anger have I forſaken thee;
" But with great mercies will I receive thee again:
" In a ſhort wrath I hid my face for a moment from
" thee;
" But with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy
" on thee[43]."

" Behold my ſervants ſhall eat, but ye ſhall be
" famiſhed;
" Behold my ſervants ſhall drink, but ye ſhall be
" thirſty;
" Behold my ſervants ſhall rejoice, but ye ſhall
" be confounded;
" Behold my ſervants ſhall ſing aloud, for glad-
" neſs of heart;
" But ye ſhall cry aloud for grief of heart;
" And in the anguiſh of a broken ſpirit ſhall ye
" howl[44]."

There is a third ſpecies of paralleliſm, in which the ſentences anſwer to each other, not by the iteration of the ſame image or

[43] ISAI. liv. 7, 8. [44] ISAI. lxv. 13, 14.

ſentiment,

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ſentiment, or the oppoſition of their contraries; but merely by the form of conſtruction. To this, which may be called the Synthetic or Conſtructive Parallelism, may be referred all ſuch as do not come within the two former claſſes: I ſhall however produce a few of the moſt remarkable inſtances:

" The law of JEHOVAH is perfect, reſtoring the
" ſoul;
" The teſtimony of JEHOVAH is ſure, making
" wiſe the ſimple:
" The precepts of JEHOVAH are right, rejoicing
" the heart;
" The commandment of JEHOVAH is clear, en-
" lightening the eyes:
" The fear of JEHOVAH is pure, enduring for
" ever;
" The judgments of JEHOVAH are truth, they
" are juſt altogether.
" More deſirable than gold, or than much fine
" gold;
" And ſweeter than honey, or the dropping of
" honey-combs [45]."

This kind of parallelism generally conſiſts of verſes ſomewhat longer than uſual, of which

[45] Ps. xix. 8—11.

there are not wanting examples in the prophets:

" How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed! the exactions
" of gold ceaſed!
" JEHOVAH hath broken the ſtaff of the wicked,
" the ſceptre of the rulers.
" He that ſmote the people in wrath with a
" ſtroke unremitted;
" He that ruled the nations in anger is perſe-
" cuted, and none hindereth.
" The whole earth is at reſt, is quiet; they burſt
" forth into a joyful ſhout;
" Even the fir-trees rejoice over thee, the ce-
" dars of Lebanon:
" Since thou art fallen, no feller hath come up
" againſt us.
" Hades from beneath is moved becauſe of thee,
" to meet thee at thy coming:
" He rouſeth for thee the mighty dead, all the
" great chiefs of the earth;
" He maketh to riſe up from their thrones all the
" kings of the nations [46]."

Triplets are frequently formed of this kind of paralleliſm:

" The clouds overflowed with water;
" The atmoſphere reſounded;

[46] ISAI. xiv. 4—9.

" Thine

" Thine arrows alſo iſſued forth;
" The voice of thy thunder was in the ſkies;
" The lightnings enlightened the world;
" The earth trembled and ſhook [47]."

" I will be as the dew to Iſrael:
" He ſhall bloſſom as the lily;
" And he ſhall ſtrike his roots like Lebanon,
" His ſuckers ſhall ſpread,
" And his glory ſhall be as the olive-tree,
" And his ſmell as Lebanon [48]."

Frequently one line or member contains two ſentiments:

" The nations raged; the kingdoms were moved;
" He uttered a voice; the earth was diſſolved:
" Be ſtill, and know that I am God:
" I will be exalted in the nations, I will be exalted
" in the earth [49]."

" When thou paſſeſt through waters I am with
" thee;
" And through rivers, they ſhall not overwhelm
" thee:
" When thou walkeſt in the fire thou ſhalt not
" be ſcorched;
" And the flame ſhall not cleave to thee [50]."

There is a peculiar figure which is frequently made uſe of in this ſpecies of paralleliſm,

[47] Ps. lxxvii. 18, 19. [48] Hos. xiv. 6, 7.
[49] Ps. xlvi. 6 and 10. [50] ISAI. xliii. 2.

and which ſeems altogether poetical: that is, when a definite number is put for an indefinite, principally, it ſhould ſeem, for the ſake of the parallelifm: for it ſometimes happens, that the circumſtances afterwards enumerated do not accurately accord with the number ſpecified:

"In ſix troubles will he deliver thee;
"And in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee[51]."

"God hath ſaid once;
"Twice alſo have I heard the ſame[52]."

That frequently-repeated paſſage of Amos is well-known:

"For three tranſgreſſions of Damaſcus,
"And for four, I will not reſtore it[53]."

The variety in the form of this ſynthetic parallelifm is very great, and the degrees of reſemblance almoſt infinite: ſo that ſometimes the ſcheme of the parallelifm is very ſubtile and obſcure, and muſt be developed by art and ability in diſtinguiſhing the different members of the ſentences, and in diſ-

[51] JOB v. 19. [52] PS. lxii. 12.
[53] AMOS i. 3, &c.

tributing

tributing the points, rather than by depending upon the obvious conſtruction. How much this principle pervades the Hebrew poetry, and how difficult of explication it is, may in ſome degree be illuſtrated by one example. This appears to conſiſt of a ſingle line; if the ſentiment only be conſidered:

"I alſo have anointed my King on Sion, the "mountain of my ſanctity[54]."

But the general form and nature of the Pſalm requires that it ſhould be divided into two parts or verſicles; as if it were,

"I alſo have anointed my king;
"I have anointed him in Sion, the mountain of "my ſanctity."

Which indeed the Maſorites ſeem to have perceived in this as well as in other places[55].

In this peculiar conformation, or paralleliſm of the ſentences, I apprehend a conſiderable part of the Hebrew metre to con-

[54] Ps. ii. 6.

[55] For they mark the word מלכי with the diſtinctive accent *Athnac*, by which they generally diſtinguiſh the members of the diſtichs. See Ps. xvii. 7. xxxii. 3. xxxiii. 14. ciii. 8. cxvi. 1, 9, 12, 14, 15, 18. cxxxvii. 2.

Author's Note.

ſiſt; though it is not improbable that ſome regard was alſo paid to the numbers and feet. But of this particular we have at preſent ſo little information, that it is utterly impoſſible to determine, whether it were modulated by the ear alone, or according to any ſettled or definite rules of proſody. Since however this, and other marks or veſtiges, as it were, of the metrical art are alike extant in the writings of the prophets, and in the books which are commonly allowed to be poetical, I think there is ſufficient reaſon to rank them in the ſame claſs.

Leſt I ſhould ſeem to have attributed too much to this conformation of the ſentences, and to have raſhly embraced an opinion not ſupported by ſufficient authority, I ſhall beg leave to quote to you the opinion of Azarias, a Jew Rabbi, not indeed a very ancient, but a very approved author [56]. "Without "doubt," ſays he, "the ſacred ſongs have "certain meaſures and proportions, but "theſe do not conſiſt in the number of the "ſyllables perfect or imperfect, according "to the form of the modern verſe; but in

[56] *Mantiſſa Differt.* ad Librum Cosri, p. 418.

" the number of things, and of the parts " of things; that is, the ſubject and the " predicate, and their adjuncts, in every " ſentence and propoſition." (Which words of Azarias are, however, to be underſtood with ſome limitation; nor are they to be literally interpreted according to their ſenſe in logical treatiſes, for he proceeds,) " Thus a " phraſe, containing two parts of a propoſi- " tion, conſiſts of two meaſures: add another " containing four, and they become four " meaſures: another again containing three " parts of a propoſition, conſiſts of three " meaſures; add to it another of the like, " and you have ſix meaſures: for you are not " to number the words or ſyllables but the " ſentences." For inſtance, " Thy right hand " O JEHOVAH," according to Azarias, conſiſts of two terms, or parts of a propoſition; to which is connected, " is all glorious in " power," conſiſting likewiſe of two terms; theſe joined together make a Tetrameter. The following is conſtructed on a ſimilar principle:

" Thy right-hand, O JEHOVAH, hath cruſhed " the enemy [57]."

[57] EXOD. XV. 6.

Thus in the following propoſitions there are three terms or meaſures,

" My-doctrine ſhall-drop, as-the-rain ; my-word
" ſhall-diſtil, as-the-dew [58]."

" And thus joined together they form an " Hexameter." In fact, what he has here remarked is neither groundleſs nor altogether juſt. For with reſpect to many paſſages, in which the diſtribution of the ſentences is very unequal, and in which the propoſitions have but little correſpondence with each other, as happens frequently in the Pſalms, we muſt have recourſe to ſome other ſolution; and when the ſentences are moſt regular and correct, they cannot at all times be reduced to his rules. But although the preſent queſtion does not depend upon this ſingle point, no man, I think, who reads with attention the poetic books, and eſpecially what may be properly called the prophetic part of them, will entertain a doubt that it is of the utmoſt importance to diſtinguiſh the ſyſtem of the verſes.

[58] DEUT. xxxii. 2.

But ſhould all that has been remarked concerning the members and diviſions of the ſentences appear light and trifling to ſome perſons, and utterly undeſerving any labour or attention; let them remember that nothing can be of greater avail to the proper underſtanding of any writer, than a previous acquaintance with both his general character, and the peculiarities of his ſtyle and manner of writing: let them recollect that tranſlators and commentators have fallen into errors upon no account more frequently, than for want of attention to this article; and indeed, I ſcarcely know any ſubject which promiſes more copiouſly to reward the labour of ſuch as are ſtudious of ſacred criticiſm, than this one in particular [59].

[59] Profeſſor MICHAELIS has ſubjoined a very conſiderable addition to this Lecture on the uſe of the parallelism in the explanation of Scripture, of which he produces ſeveral inſtances.

In Ps. xxii. 3. our Engliſh tranſlation runs thus: "They ſhall come, and ſhall declare his righteouſneſs "unto a people that ſhall be born, that *he hath done this*:" and in the Common Prayer, "unto a people that ſhall be "born, *whom the Lord hath made*." The Profeſſor juſtly obſerves, that the word which is here rendered *righteouſneſs*, may, with equal propriety, be tranſlated *truth*, and then,

then, by the aſſiſtance of the parallelism, the juſt ſenſe is reſtored, and the paſſage will run thus:

"They ſhall come, and ſhall declare his truth;
"To a people that ſhall be born (*they ſhall declare*) that
"he hath performed *it*."

That is, that he hath fulfilled his promiſes, and divine predictions.

Ps. xxv. 13. The literal tranſlation is,

"His ſoul ſhall reſt in good,
"And his ſeed ſhall inherit the land."

It is not eaſy to ſay in what ſenſe we are to take the former part of the ſentence. It may either be *to ſleep ſecure from danger*; or, *to enjoy eaſe and plenty*, i. e. *to remain in a proſperous ſtate*; or laſtly it may indicate *the ſtate after death, or a happineſs beyond the grave*. This laſt meaning the Profeſſor prefers on account of the parallelism, ſince the correſponding member of the ſentence, *his ſeed ſhall inherit the land*, is undoubtedly among thoſe bleſſings which the Deity promiſes to the righteous after death.

Ps. cxxx. 20. According to our tranſlation:

"For they ſpeak againſt thee wickedly,
"And thine enemies take *thy name* in vain."

The Profeſſor thinks that *naſa liſhave* may be tranſlated to *profeſs* falſely or to *perjure* themſelves. The ſenſe of the ſecond line will therefore run thus: *Who ſwear falſely by thy cities*, i. e. by Sichem, Bethlehem, Jeruſalem, &c. by which it was cuſtomary for the Jews to ſwear, as is plain from MATT. v. 35. and this interpretation not only is ſuch as would be ſuggeſted by a proper attention to the

parallelism,

parallelism, but is perfectly correspondent to the context:

"I would that thou wouldest slay the wicked, O God;
"And that the men of blood should depart from me!
"Who utter thy name only for deceit,
"And swear falsely by thy cities.
"Do not I hate them, who hate thee," &c.

Ps. cxxxvii. 9.

"Who giveth to the beast his food,
"And to the young ravens which cry."

More agreeable to the Hebrew idiom thus,

"Who giveth to the beast his food,
"And to the young ravens that for which they cry."

But the most complete examples of the use of the parallelism will be found in our Author's Preliminary Dissertation to his Isaiah. T.

LECTURE XX.

THE GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHETIC POETRY.

The whole of the book of Daniel, as well as of Jonah, are to be excepted as not poetical, though of the prophetic kind; alſo certain hiſtorical relations inſerted in the books of the Prophets.—Some poems occur in the prophetic writings, which properly belong to the other claſſes of poetry.—The remainder conſtitutes what may be termed a ſyſtem or code of prophetic poetry.—The character of this ſpecies of Poetry deduced from the nature and deſign of Prophecy itſelf.—An example of the true ſtyle of prophetic poetry produced from Iſaiah, and explained: alſo another from the prophecies of Balaam, tranſlated into Engliſh verſe.

IN the two laſt Lectures I endeavoured to explain upon what reaſons I was induced to claſs the predictions of the prophets among the poetical productions of the Hebrews. I ſpeak not of all, but the greater part of the prophetic writings: for there are among them parts which are not prophetic, and even among thoſe which are, there are ſome paſſages not poetical. I except, in the firſt place, thoſe narrations plainly hiſtorical, relating to the facts which gave occaſion to the pro-

phecies,

phecies, and which ſerve to introduce, to explain, and illuſtrate them: ſome of this kind occur in Iſaiah, and in Jeremiah many more. The whole of what is called the prophecy of Jonah is the bare recital of a fact, and contains nothing of poetry but the prayer of the prophet, which is an ode. Some of the prophecies themſelves muſt alſo be excepted, which are indeed ſublime and important as to the matter, but not at all poetical as to the ſtyle and metrical ſtructure: of this kind many paſſages occur in Ezekiel; who frequently appears more of the orator than the poet. The whole book of Daniel too, being no more than a plain relation of facts partly paſt and partly future, muſt be excluded the claſs of poetical prophecy. Much I confeſs of the parabolic imagery is introduced in that book, but the author introduces it as a prophet only; as viſionary and allegorical ſymbols of objects and events, totally untinctured with the true poetical colouring. The Jews, indeed, would refuſe to Daniel even the character of a prophet, but the arguments under which they ſhelter this opinion are very futile: for thoſe points which they maintain, concerning the conditions

tions, on which the gift of prophecy is imparted; the different gradations, and the diſcrimination between the true prophecy and mere inſpiration; are all trifling and abſurd, without any foundation in the nature of things, and totally deſtitute of ſcriptural authority [1]. They add, that Daniel was neither

[1] See MAIMON, *More Nebоc.* ii. 45. Our Author in this place alludes to the Rabbinical notions concerning inſpiration, which are explained more at large by BASNAGE. "They diſtinguiſh," ſays that author, "eleven degrees "of Prophecy. They reckon among inſpired men thoſe "who felt ſome inward emotions, urging them to per- "form extraordinary actions, as Samſon. Thoſe, who "compoſed Hymns and Pſalms, becauſe they believed "themſelves inſpired with God's Spirit, were accounted "ſo many prophets. However theſe prophets are diſtin- "guiſhed from the following orders: 1. When Zecha- "riah ſays, *the word of the Lord came unto me.* 2. Sa- "muel heard a voice, but did not ſee, who ſpoke. 3. "When a man ſpeaks in a dream with a prophet, as it "happened to Ezekiel, to whom a man cried, *Son of man.* "4. Angels ſpoke often in dreams. 5. It was ſome- "times thought, that God himſelf ſpoke in a dream. 6. "Some myſtical objects were diſcovered. 7. An audible "voice was heard from the midſt of theſe objects. 8. "A man is ſeen ſpeaking, as it happened to Abraham "under the oak of Mamre, which however was a viſion. "9. Laſtly, an angel is perceived ſpeaking. Thus Abra- "ham heard one, when he was binding Iſaac upon the "altar to ſacrifice him: but that was alſo a viſion" *Hiſt. of the Jews*, B. IV. ch. xviii. §. 11. T.

originally

originally educated in the prophetic diſcipline and precepts, nor afterwards lived conformably to the manner of the prophets. I do not, however, comprehend how this can diminiſh his claim to a divine miſſion and inſpiration; it may poſſibly enable us, indeed, to aſſign a reaſon for the diſſimilarity between the ſtyle of Daniel and that of the other Prophets, and for its poſſeſſing ſo little of the diction and character of poetry, which the reſt ſeem to have imbibed in common from the ſchools and diſcipline in which they were educated [2].

There

[2] We may add the decline of the Hebrew language, which in the Babyloniſh captivity loſt all its grace and elegance. Nor among ſo many evils which befel their nation, is it ſurpriſing that they ſhould have neither leiſure nor ſpirit for the cultivation of the fine arts? Beſides, when a language is confined chiefly to the loweſt of the people, it is hardly to be expected that it ſhould produce any poets worthy of the name. Let any man compare what was written in Hebrew before and after the Babyloniſh exile, and I apprehend he will perceive no leſs evident marks of decay and ruin than in the Latin language. Wherefore it appears to me very improbable, that any Pſalms, which breathe a truly ſublime and poetical ſpirit, were compoſed after the return from Babylon, excepting perhaps that elegant piece of poetry the cxxxviith. Certainly

There occur, moreover, in the writings of the Prophets, certain paſſages, which although poetical, yet do not properly belong to this ſpecies of poetry. I allude to ſome inſtances in Iſaiah, Habbakuk, and Ezekiel, which appear to conſtitute complete poems of different kinds, Odes as well as Elegies. Theſe alſo being excepted, all the other predictions of the prophets (including ſuch as are extant in the hiſtorical books, moſt of which have been occaſionally quoted in the courſe of theſe Lectures, form a whole, and conſtitute that particular ſpecies of poetry, which I diſtinguiſh by the appellation of prophetic. I ſhall now endeavour, in the firſt place, to offer to your conſideration ſuch a deſcription of this ſpecies of poetry, as may ſerve to diſtinguiſh it from the reſt; and afterwards to delineate the peculiar character

tainly nothing can be more abſurd than the error, into which ſome commentators have fallen, in attributing ſome of the ſublimeſt of the Pſalms to Ezra, than whoſe ſtyle nothing can be meaner or more ungraceful. Indeed I have myſelf ſome doubts concerning the cxxxix. which I am more inclined to attribute to Jeremiah, or ſome contemporary of his; and I think the taſte and ſpirit of the bard, who ſung ſo ſweetly elſewhere the miſeries of his nation, may very plainly be diſcerned in it. M.

of

of each of the prophets, as far as may be conſiſtent with the object of theſe Lectures.

The genius of the prophetic poetry is to be explored by a due attention to the nature and deſign of prophecy itſelf. The immediate deſign of all prophecy is to inform or amend thoſe generations that precede the events predicted, and it is uſually calculated either to excite their fears and apprehenſions, or to afford them conſolation. The means which it employs for the accompliſhment of theſe effects, are a general amplification of the ſubject, whether it be of the menacing or conſolatory kind, copious deſcriptions, diverſified, pompous and ſublime; in this alſo it neceſſarily avoids too great a degree of exactneſs, and too formal a diſplay of the minuter circumſtances; rather employing a vague and general ſtyle of deſcription, expreſſive only of the nature and magnitude of the ſubject: for prophecy in its very nature implies ſome degree of obſcurity, and is always, as the Apoſtle elegantly expreſſes it, "like a light glimmering in a dark place, "until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar "ariſe [3]." But there is alſo a further uſe

[3] 2 PET. ii. 9.

and intention of prophecy, which regards thoſe who live after the prediction is accompliſhed, and that is, the demonſtration and atteſtation which it affords of the divine veracity: this evidently appears to demand a different form of enunciation; for correct language, apt imagery, and an exact diſplay of circumſtances, are peculiarly adapted to this purpoſe. Since, however, a very plain deſcription would totally withdraw the veil of obſcurity, a more ſparing uſe of this liberty of particularizing is frequently adequate to that purpoſe; for the particular notification of one or two circumſtances, united with a general propriety in the imagery, the proper adaptation of which ſhall appear after the event, will afford an accumulation of evidence that cannot be withſtood, as might be demonſtrated in a number of inſtances *. The prophetic ſtyle, therefore, is chiefly conſtructed on the former principle; that is, it commonly prefers a general mode of amplifying and elevating the ſubject, rarely and cautiouſly deſcending to a circumſtantial detail.

* See LECT. IX. concluſion.

There

There is alſo another particular, which muſt not be omitted. Prophecy frequently takes in, at a ſingle glance, a variety of events, diſtinct both in nature and time, and purſues the extreme and principal deſign through all its different gradations. From this cauſe alſo it principally employs general ideas, and expreſſes them by imagery of eſtabliſhed uſe and acceptation, for theſe are equally capable of comprehending the general ſcope of the divine counſels, and of accompanying the particular progreſſions of circumſtances, ſituations, and events; they may be eaſily applied to the intermediate relations and ends, but muſt be more accurately weighed and proportioned to equal the magnitude and importance of the ultimate deſign.

If ſuch be the genius of prophecy; if it be chiefly employed in deſcribing only the exterior lineaments of events, and in depicting and embelliſhing general effects; it will not be difficult to underſtand with how much advantage it may make uſe of the aſſiſtance and miniſtration of poetry, and in particular of the parabolic ſtyle; the nature of which, as I have already copiouſly ſtated, is to afford

an abundance and variety of imagery of eſtabliſhed uſe and acceptation, from which every ſubject may receive the moſt ample and the moſt proper embelliſhments. Hence too we may eaſily collect the peculiar character of the prophetic poetry.

This ſpecies of poetry is more ornamented, more ſplendid, and more florid than any other. It abounds more in imagery, at leaſt in that ſpecies of imagery which, in the parabolic ſtyle, is of common and eſtabliſhed acceptation, and which, by means of a ſettled analogy always preſerved, is transferred from certain and definite objects to expreſs indefinite and general ideas. Of all the images proper to the parabolic ſtyle, it moſt frequently introduces thoſe which are taken from natural objects and from ſacred hiſtory: it abounds moſt in metaphors, allegories, compariſons, and even in copious and diffuſe deſcriptions. It poſſeſſes all that genuine enthuſiaſm, which is the natural attendant on inſpiration; it excels in the brightneſs of imagination and in clearneſs and energy of diction, and conſequently riſes to an uncommon pitch of ſublimity: hence alſo it often is very happy in the expreſſion

and

and delineation of the paſſions, though more commonly employed in the exciting of them; this indeed is its immediate object, over this it preſides as its peculiar province.

In reſpect to the order, diſpoſition, and ſymmetry of a perfect poem of the prophetic kind, I do not know of any certain definition, which will admit of general application. Naturally free, and of too ardent a ſpirit to be confined by rule, it is uſually guided by the nature of the ſubject only, and the impulſe of divine inſpiration. There are not wanting, it is true, inſtances of great elegance and perfection in theſe particulars. Among the ſhorter prophecies, I need only mention thoſe of Balaam, each of which is poſſeſſed of a certain accuracy of arrangement and ſymmetry of form; they open with an elegant exordium, they proceed with a methodical continuation of the ſubject, and are wound up with a full and graceful concluſion. There are many ſimilar inſtances in the books of the Prophets, and particularly in Iſaiah, which deſerve the higheſt commendation, and may with propriety be claſſed with the moſt perfect and regular ſpecimens of poetry. I ſhall ſelect

for your conſideration one example from that moſt accompliſhed writer, which is embelliſhed with all the moſt ſtriking ornaments of poetry: from this inſtance I ſhall not only demonſtrate with what accuracy the prophetic Muſe ſometimes preſerves the proper order and arrangement of the parts and circumſtances; but I ſhall be enabled, at the ſame time, to illuſtrate moſt of thoſe poſitions, which I have now laid down, concerning the nature and genius of the prophetic poetry. Such an illuſtration will probably be not unneceſſary; ſince it is to be apprehended, that what has been remarked only in general terms upon ſo ſubtile and difficult a ſubject, may, without the aid of example, appear not a little perplexed and obſcure.

The thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth chapters of Iſaiah contain a remarkable prophecy. It is a ſimple, regular, and perfect poem, conſiſting of two parts according to the nature of the ſubject, which, as to its general properties, is explained with the utmoſt perſpicuity. The firſt part of the prophecy contains a denunciation of extraordinary puniſhment, indeed nothing ſhort of total deſtruc-

tion

tion againſt the enemies of the church of God; and afterwards, in conſequence of this event, a full and complete reſtoration is promiſed to the church itſelf. The Prophet introduces the ſubject by a magnificent exordium, invoking univerſal nature to the obſervation of theſe events, in which the whole world ſhould ſeem to be intereſted:

" Draw near, O ye nations, and hearken;
" And attend unto me, O ye people!
" Let the earth hear, and the fulneſs thereof;
" The world, and all that ſpring from it[5]."

He then publiſhes the decree of JEHOVAH concerning the extirpation of all thoſe nations againſt whom " his wrath is kindled:" and he amplifies this act of vengeance and deſtruction by an admirable ſelection of ſplendid imagery, all of which is of the ſame kind with that which is made uſe of by the prophets upon ſimilar occaſions; the nature of which is to exaggerate the force, the magnitude, atrocity and importance of the impending viſitation; whilſt nothing determinate is ſpecified concerning the manner, the

[5] Chap. xxxiv. 1.

time, the place, or other minute circumſtances. He firſt exhibits that truly martial picture of ſlaughter and deſtruction after a victory:

" And their ſlain ſhall be caſt out;
" And from their carcaſſes their ſtench ſhall
" aſcend;
" And the mountains ſhall melt down with their
" blood[6]."

He then takes a bolder flight, and illuſtrates his deſcription by imagery borrowed from the Moſaic chaos (which is a common ſource of figurative language on theſe occaſions, and is appropriated to the expreſſion of the downfal of nations); and, as if he were diſplaying the total ſubverſion of the univerſe itſelf:

" And all the hoſt of heaven ſhall waſte away;
" And the heavens ſhall be rolled up like a
" ſcroll:
" And all their hoſt ſhall wither;
" As the withered leaf drappeth from the vine,
" And as the blighted fruit from the fig tree[7]."

[6] Ver. 3. [7] Ver. 4.

A different

A different image is immediately introduced; a ſolemn ſacrifice is celebrated, and an uncommon number of victims are diſplayed: JEHOVAH himſelf takes a part in this magnificent ſcene, and every circumſtance is brought directly before our eyes:

" For my ſword is made bare in the heavens;
" Behold, on Edom it ſhall deſcend;
" And on the people juſtly by me devoted to
" deſtruction.
" The ſword of JEHOVAH is ſatiated with blood;
" It is pampered with fat:
" With the blood of lambs, and of goats;
" With the fat of the reins of rams;
" For JEHOVAH celebrateth a ſacrifice in Botzra,
" And a great ſlaughter in the land of Edom[8]."

The goats, the rams, the bulls, the flocks, and other animals, which are mentioned in

[8] Ver. 5, 6. In this prophecy Edom is particularly marked out as an object of the Divine vengeance. The principal provocation of Edom was their inſulting the Jews in their diſtreſs, and joining againſt them with their enemies the Chaldeans: See AMOS i. 11. EZEK. xxv. 12. xxxv. 15. PS. cxxxvii. 7. Accordingly the Edomites were, together with the reſt of the neighbouring nations, ravaged and laid waſte by Nebuchadnezzar: See JER. xxv. 15—26. MAL. i. 2, 3, 4. and ſee MARSHAM *Can. Chron. Sæc.* xviii. who calls this the age of the deſtruction of cities. Bp. LOWTH's *Iſaiah* 171. T.

this

this paſſage and thoſe which follow, are commonly uſed by the prophets to denote the haughty, ferocious, and inſolent tyrants and chiefs of thoſe nations, which were inimical to God. On the ſame principle we may explain the alluſion to Botzra and Idumea, a city and nation in the higheſt degree obnoxious to the people of God. Theſe, however, the prophecy ſeems only ſlightly or curſorily to glance at: the phraſeology is indeed of that kind which expreſſes generals by particulars; or conſiſts, as I formerly remarked, of a figure taken from a determinate and definite object, and by analogy applied in a more extenſive ſenſe; in which reſpect the very words which are made uſe of have in this place a peculiar form and propriety [9]. But the ſame circumſtance is again deſcribed by a ſucceſſion of new and ſplendid images borrowed from the overthrow of Sodom, which, as was formerly demonſtrated, may be termed one of the common-places of the inſpired Poets:

[9] See LOWTH and VITRINGA on the place, and on chap. lxiii. 1.

"For

" For it is the day of vengeance to JEHOVAH;
" The year of recompenſe to the defender of the
" cauſe of Sion.
" And her torrents ſhall be turned into pitch,
" And her duſt into ſulphur;
" And her whole land ſhall become burning
" pitch:
" By night or by day it ſhall not be extinguiſhed;
" For ever ſhall her ſmoke aſcend:
" From generation to generation ſhe ſhall lie
" deſert;
" To everlaſting ages no one ſhall paſs through
" her [10]."

Laſtly, the ſame event is prefigured under the image of a vaſt and ſolitary deſert, to which, according to the divine decree, that region is devoted [11]. This deſcription the prophet afterwards improves, diverſifies, and enlarges, by the addition of ſeveral important circumſtances, all which, however, have a certain analogy or connexion with each other.

[10] Ver. 8, 9, 10.

[11] Ver. 11, &c.—Ver. 11. " For פי הוא three MSS. " have פי יהוה: two others have it in a corrected hand. " The LXX alſo read יהוה." K. Two MSS. *Erfurt*, read פיהו. See Bib. Heb. MICHAELIS on the place.

The

The other part of the poem is conſtructed upon ſimilar principles, and exhibits a beautiful contraſt to the preceding ſcene. The imagery poſſeſſes every poſſible advantage of ornament and variety; it is like the former, altogether of a general kind, and of extenſive application; but the meaning is plain and perſpicuous. Many of the preceding images are taken from the Sacred Hiſtory; the following are almoſt entirely from the objects of nature:

"The deſert and the waſte, ſhall be glad;
"And the wilderneſs ſhall rejoice and flouriſh:
"Like the roſe ſhall it beautifully flouriſh;
"And the well-watered plain of Jordan ſhall
"alſo rejoice:
"And the glory of Lebanon ſhall be given
"unto it,
"The beauty of Carmel and of Sharon;
"Theſe ſhall behold the glory of JEHOVAH,
"The Majeſty of our God [12]."

I formerly remarked the extenſive application of Lebanon and Carmel in a figurative ſenſe [13], and that they are ſometimes expreſſive even of the divine glory and Ma-

[12] Chap. xxxv. 1, 2. [13] See LECT. VI.

jeſty.

jeſty [14]. The cultivation and watering of a barren and rocky ſoil is ſo frequently, I might ſay invariably, in the parabolic ſtyle employed to denote the divine grace and ſpiritual endowments, that there is no neceſſity for any further explanation of this ſymbol; nor is the ſucceeding imagery, which, according to a ſimilar analogy, ſeems to illuſtrate the ſame event, leſs clear and perſpicuous.

To him who attentively reads and conſiders the whole poem, the order and arrangement of the ſubject will be more fully apparent. The paſſages which I have noted will, however, I apprehend, be ſufficient to demonſtrate the ſpecies of imagery, the ſtyle, and colours moſt congenial to the prophetic Muſe; they will alſo, I flatter myſelf, be ſufficient in ſome meaſure to explain the manner in which ſhe contrives to diſplay, in the ſtrongeſt colours, the general nature, magnitude, and importance of events; and at the ſame time to leave the particular ſituations, the intermediate gradations, and all the minuter circumſtances concealed under

[14] See LECT. VIII.

the

the bold and prominent features of the deſcription, till the accompliſhment of the prediction. There are indeed one or two paſſages in this prophecy which would ſerve to illuſtrate this poſition [15]; in the reſt, the circum-

[15] See chap. xxxv. 4, 5, 6, 8. Which, without a doubt, in their proximate ſenſe relate to the firſt coming of the Meſſiah; to the miracles which were performed by him; to the preaching of the Goſpel; and the effuſion of the Holy Spirit. In the 8th, the abſurd interpunctuation, rendered ſacred by the authority of the Maſorites, creates a degree of almoſt impenetrable obſcurity. It is, however, a true pentacolon, and ought to be diſtributed in this manner:

"And an highway ſhall be there;
"And it ſhall be called the way of holineſs:
"No unclean perſon ſhall paſs through it:
"But he himſelf ſhall be with them, walking in the way,
"And the fooliſh ſhall not err therein."

HE, that is, our God, ſpoken of before in the 4th verſe; ος εσκηνωσεν εν ἡμιν, και εσκηνωσε και εξηλθεν εφ ἡμας. Thus the CHAL. the SYR. the VUL. and ſome of the more modern tranſlators have diſtinguiſhed them. VITRINGA, who is by far the moſt learned of the commentators, but too much a ſlave to the authority of the Maſorites, has in vain attempted a refutation of them.

HOUBIGANT remarks, that the LXX in the 2d verſe, for ורדן read וירדן, concerning which reading, conceiving it to be of conſiderable importance, I conſulted Dr. Kennicott.

circumſtances and progreſs of the particular events are not yet unfolded; for this prophecy

nicott. Though the manuſcript copies, however, afforded no aſſiſtance towards the reſtoration of this word, he very kindly communicated ſome critical remarks upon the whole chapter, which I ſhall endeavour to explain with as much brevity as poſſible.

Ver. 1. "*Jeſuſom* (they will rejoice.) The old verſions do not allow of the ſuffix. Perhaps the ם (m) may have been added from the beginning of the next word. It was cuſtomary in the Hebrew manuſcripts, in order to fill up one line to take the initial letter or letters of the word that began the next, which, however, they failed not to copy in its proper place."

Ver. 2. It is well obſerved by Houbigant, that the Seventy read this differently, for inſtead of *Gilat-ve-ranen* (with joy and ſinging) they certainly read other words, which they rendered τα ερημα τε Ιορδανε (the deſert places of Jordan) in the ſame manner alſo the Arabic; and this reading ſeems moſt perfectly to agree with the deſign of the prophet. He thinks it ought to be read *Galat Jordan* (the marſhes of Jordan): I would myſelf prefer *Gidah Jordan* (the bank of Jordan.) In the preſent reading there is neither meaning nor conſtruction, for an antecedent is wanting, to the word לה (to it.) "The word "*Gedot* occurs in four places, and thrice is joined to Jordan, (as in this): and though the ſingular *Gidah* does not elſewhere occur, it is found in the Chaldee *Gida* (a bank.)"

"Six MSS. for לה read לך. If this be admitted, the verſion will be,

"And

phecy is evidently one of thoſe which are not yet completely fulfilled, and of which the greater part at leaſt is yet depoſited in the ſecret counſels of the Moſt High.

That

" And thou alſo ſhalt exult, O bank of Jordan;
" The glory of Lebanon ſhall be given unto thee."

" But perhaps the true reading may be *ve-thagali et* (and " thou ſhalt exult, O bank): for the final *Pe* is often ſo " written, that it can ſcarcely be diſtinguiſhed from the " *Tau*: as is the caſe with this ſame word in two MSS."

Ver. 7. " *Rabetzah* (a couching-place) ſhould, it ap- " pears, be in the plural to agree with *thanim* (dragons): " our moſt ancient MS. has *mem* for *he*; and another " has *rabitzah*, retaining the *jod*, though in a different " place. The meaning, however, of this verſe is;

" In the place, which was inhabited by dragons,
" Shall graſs ſpring up inſtead of reeds and ruſhes."

Ver. 8. " Not only the *Syr.* but alſo fourteen MSS. omit " the ſecond *ve-derach*. Houbigant thinks, that for לה we " ought to read לו; and rightly, for the ſuffix in the fol- " lowing verſe, which relates to the ſame is maſculine, " יערבנו."

Ver. 9. " After *ve-halechu* (ſhall walk) the word *ſhom* " (*there*) ſeems wanting: it is added by the LXX and the " AR." K.

VITRINGA approves of the opinion of the Chaldee paraphraſt, who in ver. 8, thus tranſlates: " and thoſe who " paſs that way ſhall not faint." He however has not

embraced

That I may not however conclude this lecture without exhibiting the form of ſome prophetic poem complete in all parts, I have ſelected for this purpoſe one of the prophecies of Balaam, which I ſo lately mentioned, and which in the courſe of theſe lectures have more than once deſervedly attracted our attention: for indeed I do not know that the whole ſcope of the Hebrew poetry contains any thing more exquiſite or perfect. This, which is at preſent under our conſideration, abounds in gay and ſplendid imagery copied immediately from the tablet of Nature; and is chiefly conſpicuous for the glowing elegance of the ſtyle, and the form and diverſity of the figures. Though every attempt to diſplay the beauties of the Hebrew imagery in the poetry of another language muſt fall greatly ſhort of the deſign, it will yet give a little variety to our ſtudies, to inter-

embraced the reading, for it is plain he did not perceive in what manner it had been formed from the Hebrew text. The CHALDEAN paraphraſt doubtleſs, inſtead of והוא למו read ולא תמו. This remark was furniſhed me, with many others, by a diſtinguiſhed character, whoſe great erudition reflects honour upon a very exalted ſituation.

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ſperſe them occaſionally with modern verſe. On theſe occaſions, as indeed on every other, I muſt rely upon the candour of this audience to accept in good part the willing tribute of my faint endeavours [16].

In proud array thy tents expand,
O Iſrael, o'er the ſubject land:
As the broad vales in proſpect riſe,
As gardens by the waters ſpread,
As cedars of majeſtic ſize,
That ſhade the ſacred fountain's head.

Thy torrents ſhall the earth o'erflow,
O'erwhelming each obdurate foe.
In vain the mind eſſays to trace
The glories of thy countleſs race,
In vain thy king's imperial ſtate
Shall haughty Agag emulate.

His mighty God's protecting hand
Led him from Pharoah's tyrant land.
Strong as the beaſt that rules the plain,
What power his fury ſhall reſtrain?
Who dares reſiſt, his force ſhall feel.
The nations ſee, and trembling fly,
Or in th' unequal conflict die;
And glut with blood his thirſty ſteel.

[16] See NUM. xxiv. 5—9.

With

With aſpect keen he mark'd his prey,—
He couch'd—In ſecret ambuſh lay.—
Who ſhall the furious lion dare?
Who ſhall unmov'd his terrors ſee?
—Bleſt, who for thee exalts his prayer!
And curſt the wretch, who curſeth thee!

LECTURE XXI.

THE PECULIAR CHARACTER OF EACH OF THE PROPHETS.

The particular ſtyle and character of the different Prophets. what parts of each of them are poetical, and what otherwiſe.—Nothing deſerving of notice of this kind in the poetry of Greece.—In the Latin poetry the fourth Eclogue of Virgil is remarkable; that poem much more obſcure than it is generally accounted, and has not hitherto been properly explained.

"THE Prophets have each their peculiar character," ſays Jerome, ſpeaking of the twelve minor prophets[1]. The ſame however might more properly be affirmed with reſpect to the three greater: for Iſaiah is extremely different from Jeremiah; nor is it eaſy to conceive any compoſition of the ſame denomination more diſſimilar to both of them than the book of Ezekiel.

Iſaiah, the firſt of the prophets, both in order and dignity, abounds in ſuch tranſcendant excellencies, that he may be properly ſaid to afford the moſt perfect model of the

[1] Præf. in XII Proph.

prophetic

prophetic poetry. He is at once elegant and ſublime, forcible and ornamented; he unites energy with copiouſneſs, and dignity with variety. In his ſentiments there is uncommon elevation and majeſty; in his imagery the utmoſt propriety, elegance, dignity, and diverſity; in his language uncommon beauty and energy; and, notwithſtanding the obſcurity of his ſubjects, a ſurpriſing degree of clearneſs and ſimplicity. To theſe we may add, there is ſuch ſweetneſs in the poetical compoſition of his ſentences, whether it proceed from art or genius, that if the Hebrew poetry at preſent is poſſeſſed of any remains of its native grace and harmony, we ſhall chiefly find them in the writings of Iſaiah: ſo that the ſaying of Ezekiel may moſt juſtly be applied to this prophet:

"Thou art the confirmed exemplar of meaſures,
"Full of wiſdom, and perfect in beauty[2]."

Iſaiah greatly excels too in all the graces of method, order, connexion, and arrangement: though in aſſerting this we muſt not forget the nature of the prophetic impulſe, which

[2] EZEK. xxviii. 12.

bears away the mind with irreſiſtible violence, and frequently in rapid tranſitions from near to remote objects, from human to divine: we muſt alſo be careful in remarking the limits of particular predictions, ſince, as they are now extant, they are often improperly connected, without any marks of diſcrimination, which injudicious arrangement, on ſome occaſions, creates almoſt inſuperable difficulties. I lately produced a ſpecimen from this prophet of a complete poem diſpoſed in the moſt perſpicuous order; and in the former part of his volume many inſtances may be found, where the particular predictions are diſtinctly marked. The latter part, which I ſuppoſe to commence at the fortieth chapter, is perhaps the moſt elegant ſpecimen remaining of inſpired compoſition, and yet in this reſpect is attended with conſiderable difficulty. It is, in fact, a body or collection of different prophecies, nearly allied to each other as to the ſubject, which, for that reaſon, having a ſort of connexion, are not to be ſeparated but with the utmoſt difficulty. The general ſubject is the reſtoration of the church. Its deliverance from captivity; the deſtruction of idolatry; the vindi-

vindication of the divine power and truth; the conſolation of the Iſraelites, the divine invitation which is extended to them, their incredulity, impiety, and rejection; the calling in of the Gentiles; the reſtoration of the choſen people; the glory and felicity of the church in its perfect ſtate; and the ultimate deſtruction of the wicked, are all ſet forth with a ſufficient reſpect to order and method. If we read theſe paſſages with attention, and duly regard the nature and genius of the myſtical allegory, as explained in the eleventh Lecture; at the ſame time remembering, that all theſe points have been frequently touched upon in other prophecies promulged at different times, we ſhall neither find any irregularity in the arrangement of the whole, nor any want of order and connexion as to matter or ſentiment in the different parts. I muſt add, that I eſteem the whole book of Iſaiah to be poetical, a few paſſages excepted, which, if brought together, would not at moſt exceed the bulk of five or ſix chapters.

Jeremiah, though deficient neither in elegance nor ſublimity, muſt give place in

both to Iſaiah. Jerome [3] ſeems to object againſt him a ſort of ruſticity of language, no veſtige of which, I muſt however confeſs, I have been able to diſcover. His ſentiments, it is true, are not always the moſt elevated, nor are his periods always neat and compact; but theſe are faults common to thoſe writers, whoſe principal aim is to excite the gentler affections, and to call forth the tear of ſympathy or ſorrow. This obſervation is very ſtrongly exemplified in the Lamenta-

[3] *Præf. in Jer.* He probably adopted this opinion from his maſters, the Jews. Of the more modern Rabbies, ABARBANEL (præf. in Jer.) complains grievouſly of the grammatical ignorance of the prophet, and his frequent ſoleciſms; which he ſays Ezra corrected by the Keri or marginal notes, for he remarks that they occur more frequently in him than elſewhere. Abſurd and ridiculous! to attribute the errors of tranſcribers, which occur in almoſt every part of the Hebrew text, to the ſacred writers themſelves, the greater part of theſe errors he would indeed have found ſcarcely to exiſt, if he had conſulted the more correct copies, which remain even at this day: for among theſe very marginal readings, there are but few, which, in the more ancient MSS. are not found in the text. WALTON has long ſince given a remarkable example of this kind (*Prolegom.* iv. 12.) The collations of Dr. KENNICOTT will afford many more.

Author's Note.

tions,

tions, where theſe are the prevailing paſſions; it is however frequently inſtanced in the prophecies of this author, and moſt of all in the beginning of the book [4], which is chiefly poetical. The middle of it is almoſt entirely hiſtorical. The latter part, again, conſiſting of the ſix laſt chapters, is altogether poetical [5]; it contains ſeveral different predictions, which are diſtinctly marked, and in theſe the prophet approaches very near the ſublimity of Iſaiah. On the whole, however, I can ſcarcely pronounce above half the book of Jeremiah to be poetical.

Ezekiel is much inferior to Jeremiah in elegance; in ſublimity he is not even excelled by Iſaiah: but his ſublimity is of a totally different kind [6]. He is deep, vehement, tragical;

[4] See the whole of chap. ix. chap. xiv. 17, &c. xx. 14—18.

[5] Chap. xlvi—li. to ver. 59. chap. lii. properly belongs to the Lamentations, to which it ſerves as an exordium.

[6] I muſt confeſs that I feel not perfectly ſatisfied with myſelf, when in a matter entirely dependant upon taſte, I can by no means bring myſelf to agree with our author. So far from eſteeming Ezekiel equal to Iſaiah in ſublimity, I am

tragical; the only ſenſation he affects to excite is the terrible: his ſentiments are elevated,

I am inclined rather to think, that he diſplays more art and luxuriance in amplifying and decorating his ſubject than is conſiſtent with the poetical fervour, or indeed with true ſublimity. He is in general an imitator, and yet he has the art of giving an air of novelty and ingenuity, but not of grandeur and ſublimity, to all his compoſition. The imagery which is familiar to the Hebrew poetry he conſtantly makes uſe of, and thoſe figures which were invented by others, but were only glanced at, or partially diſplayed by thoſe who firſt uſed them, he dwells upon, and depicts with ſuch accuracy and copiouſneſs, that he leaves nothing to add to them, nothing to be ſupplied by the reader's imagination. On this ſcore his ingenuity is to be commended, and he is therefore of uſe to his readers, becauſe he enables them better to underſtand the ancient poets; but he certainly does not ſtrike with admiration, or diſplay any trait of ſublimity.

Of this I will propoſe only one example: many of the ſame kind may be found in looking over the writings of this prophet. In deſcribing a great ſlaughter, it is very common in the beſt poets to introduce a ſlight alluſion to birds of prey. Thus in the ILIAD:

Αυλης δ' ἑλωρια τευχε κυνεσσιν
Οιωνοισι τε πασι———

"Whoſe limbs, unbury'd on the naked ſhore,
"Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore." POPE.

Thus, it is the language of boaſting in the hiſtorical part of Scripture—"I will give thy fleſh unto the fowls of

"the

vated, fervid, full of fire, indignant; his imagery is crouded, magnificent, terrific, ſome-

" the air, and unto the beaſts of the field." 1 SAM. xvii. 44. Aſaph alſo in Ps. lxxviii. 48. " He gave their cattle " to the hail, and their flocks to the birds." Moſes is ſtill more ſublime, DEUT. xxxii. 23, 24.

" I will ſpend mine arrows upon them.
" *They ſhall be* eaten up with hunger, a prey unto birds,
" And to bitter deſtruction!
" I will alſo ſend the teeth of beaſts upon them,
" With the poiſon of the reptiles of the earth."

But HABAKKUK is more excellent than either of the former, chap. iii. 5. ſpeaking of the victory of JEHOVAH over his enemies:

" Before him went the peſtilence,
" And his footſteps were traced by the birds."

Doubtleſs, the *birds* of *prey*. ISAIAH is ſomewhat more copious, chap. xxxiv. 6, 7.

" For JEHOVAH celebrateth a ſacrifice in Botzra,
" And a great ſlaughter in the land of Edom.
" And the wild goats ſhall fall down with them;
" And the bullocks, together with the bulls:
" And their own land ſhall be drunken with their blood,
" And their duſt ſhall be enriched with fat."

Theſe and other images Ezekiel has adopted, and has ſtudiouſly amplified with ſingular ingenuity; and by exhauſting all the imagery applicable to the ſubject, has in a manner

ſometimes almoſt to diſguſt; his language is pompous, ſolemn, auſtere, rough, and at times

ner made them his own. In the firſt prediction of the ſlaughter of Magog, the whole chapter conſiſts of a moſt magnificent amplification of all the circumſtances and apparatus of war, ſo that ſcarcely any part of the ſubject is left untouched; he adds afterwards in a bold and unuſual ſtyle—"Thus, Son of man, ſaith JEHOVAH, ſpeak "unto every feathered fowl, and to every beaſt of the "field: aſſemble yourſelves and come, gather yourſelves "on every ſide to the banquet, which I prepare for you, "a great banquet on the mountains of Iſrael. Ye ſhall "eat fleſh, and ye ſhall drink blood; ye ſhall eat the fleſh "of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of "the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bul"locks, all of them fatlings of Baſhan. Ye ſhall eat "fat till ye be ſatiate, and drink blood till ye be drunken "in the banquet which I have prepared for you. Ye "ſhall be filled at my table with horſes and chariots, with "mighty men, and with men of valour, ſaith the Lord "JEHOVAH." EZEK. xxxviii. 17—20. In this I ſeem to read a poet, who is unwilling to omit any thing of the figurative kind which preſents itſelf to his mind, and would think his poem deficient, if he did not adorn it with every probable fiction which could be added: and for this very reaſon I cannot help placing him rather in the middle than ſuperior claſs. Obſerve how the author of the Apocalyps, who is in general an imitator, but endued with a ſublimer genius, and in whoſe proſe all the ſplendour of poetry may be diſcerned, has conducted theſe ſentiments of Ezekiel: "I ſaw an Angel ſtanding in the

"Sun;

times unpoliſhed: he employs frequent repetitions, not for the ſake of grace or elegance, but

"Sun; and he cried with a loud voice unto the fowls "that fly in the midſt of heaven, Come and gather your- "ſelves together unto the ſupper of the great God; that "ye may eat of the fleſh of kings, and of captains, and "the fleſh of mighty men, and the fleſh of horſes, and "of them that ſit upon them, and the fleſh of all men, "both free and bond, both ſmall and great." REV. xix. 17, 18.

But Ezekiel goes yet further, ſo delighted is he with this image, ſo intent is he upon the by-paths of the Muſes, that he gives even the trees, taking them for empires, to the birds, and their ſhades or ghoſts he conſigns to the infernal regions. Thus chap. xxxi. 13—15. "Upon "his trunk ſhall all the fowls of heaven remain, and all "the beaſts of the field ſhall be upon his branches. To "the end that none of all the trees by the waters ſhall "exalt themſelves for their height, nor ſhoot up their top "among the thick boughs; neither their trees ſtand up in "their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered "unto death to the nether parts of the earth in the midſt "of the children of men, with them that go down to "the pit, &c." In this we find novelty and variety, great fertility of genius, but no ſublimity.

I had almoſt forgotten to mention, that Ezekiel lived at a period when the Hebrew language was viſibly on the decline. And when we compare him with the Latin poets who ſucceeded the Auguſtine age, we may find ſome reſemblance in the ſtyle, ſomething that indicates the old age of poetry. M.

If

but from the vehemence of paſſion and indignation. Whatever ſubject he treats of, that he ſedulouſly purſues, from that he rarely departs, but cleaves as it were to it; whence the connexion is in general evident and well preſerved. In many reſpects he is perhaps excelled by the other prophets; but in that ſpecies of compoſition to which he ſeems by nature adapted, the forcible, the impetuous, the great and ſolemn, not one of the ſacred writers is ſuperior to him. His diction is ſufficiently perſpicuous, all his obſcurity conſiſts in the nature of the ſubject. Viſions, (as for inſtance among others, thoſe of Hoſea, Amos, and Jeremiah) are neceſſarily dark and confuſed. The greater part of Ezekiel, towards the middle of the book eſpecially, is poetical, whether we regard the matter or

If I may ſpeak my mind freely of Ezekiel, I muſt confeſs I think his fault is neither a want of novelty nor of ſublimity, but of grace and uniformity. There is ſo much inequality in his compoſition, that ſcarcely any figure is kept up without ſinking into the *bathos*; and if he introduce in one line a grand image, he pays no attention to the ſupporting of it in the next. What the Gottingen profeſſor remarks concerning the decline of the Hebrew language, evident in the poetry of this author, is very juſt. T.

the diction. His periods, however, are frequently ſo rude and incompact, that I am often at a loſs how to pronounce concerning his performance in this reſpect.

Iſaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, as far as relates to ſtyle, may be ſaid to hold the ſame rank among the Hebrews, as Homer, Simonides, and Æſchylus among the Greeks.

Hoſea is the firſt in order of the minor prophets, and is, perhaps, Jonah excepted, the moſt ancient of them all. His ſtyle exhibits the appearance of very remote antiquity; it is pointed, energetic, and conciſe. It bears a diſtinguiſhed mark of poetical compoſition, in that priſtine brevity and condenſation, which is obſervable in the ſentences, and which later writers have in ſome meaſure neglected. This peculiarity has not eſcaped the obſervation of Jerome: "He is "altogether," ſays he, ſpeaking of this prophet, "laconic and ſententious [7]." But this very circumſtance, which anciently was ſuppoſed, no doubt, to impart uncommon force and elegance, in the preſent ruinous ſtate of the Hebrew literature, is productive of ſo much

[7] Præf. in XII Proph.

obſcurity,

obſcurity, that although the general ſubject of this writer be ſufficiently obvious, he is the moſt difficult and perplexed of all the prophets. There is, however, another reaſon for the obſcurity of his ſtyle: Hoſea propheſied during the reigns of the four kings of Judah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah; the duration of his miniſtry, therefore, in whatever manner we calculate, muſt include a very conſiderable ſpace of time; we have now only a ſmall volume of his remaining, which, it ſeems, contains his principal prophecies; and theſe are extant in a continued ſeries, with no marks of diſtinction as to the times in which they were publiſhed, or the ſubjects of which they treat. There is therefore no cauſe to wonder, if in peruſing the prophecies of Hoſea, we ſometimes find ourſelves in a ſimilar predicament with thoſe who conſulted the ſcattered leaves of the Sibyl.

The ſtyle of Joel is eſſentially different from that of Hoſea; but the general character of his diction, though of a different kind, is not leſs poetical. He is elegant, perſpicuous, copious, and fluent; he is alſo ſublime, animated, and energetic. In the

firſt

firſt and ſecond chapters he diſplays the full force of the Prophetic Poetry, and ſhews how naturally it inclines to the uſe of metaphors, allegories, and compariſons. Nor is the connexion of the matter leſs clear and evident, than the complexion of the ſtyle: this is exemplified in the diſplay of the impending evils, which gave riſe to the prophecy; the exhortation to repentance; the promiſes of happineſs and ſucceſs both terreſtrial and eternal to thoſe who become truly penitent; the reſtoration of the Iſraelites; and the vengeance to be taken of their adverſaries. But while we allow this juſt commendation to his perſpicuity both in language and arrangement, we muſt not deny that there is ſometimes great obſcurity obſervable in his ſubject, and particularly in the latter part of the prophecy.

Jerome calls Amos "rude in ſpeech, but "not in knowledge[8];" applying to him what St. Paul modeſtly profeſſes of himſelf[9]. Many have followed the authority of Jerome, in ſpeaking of this prophet, as if he were indeed quite rude, ineloquent, and deſtitute of

[8] Procem. Comment. in Amos. [9] 2 COR. xi. 6.

all the embelliſhments of compoſition. The matter is, however, far otherwiſe. Let any perſon who has candour and perſpicacity enough to judge, not from the man but from his writings, open the volume of his predictions, and he will, I think, agree with me, that our ſhepherd "is not a whit be-"hind the very chief of the prophets[10]." He will agree that as in ſublimity and magnificence he is almoſt equal to the greateſt, ſo in ſplendour of diction, and elegance of expreſſion he is ſcarcely inferior to any. The ſame celeſtial Spirit indeed actuated Iſaiah and Daniel in the court, and Amos in the ſheep-folds; conſtantly ſelecting ſuch interpreters of the divine will as were beſt adapted to the occaſion, and ſometimes "from the "mouth of babes and ſucklings perfecting "praiſe:" occaſionally employing the natural eloquence of ſome, and occaſionally making others eloquent.

The ſtyle of Micah is for the moſt part cloſe, forcible, pointed, and conciſe; ſometimes approaching the obſcurity of Hoſea: in many parts animated and ſublime, and in general truly poetical.

[10] 2 Cor. xi. 5.

None of the minor prophets, however, ſeem to equal Nahum, in boldneſs, ardour, and ſublimity. His prophecy too forms a regular and perfect poem; the exordium is not merely magnificent, it is truly majeſtic; the preparation for the deſtruction of Nineveh, and the deſcription of its downfal and deſolation are expreſſed in the moſt vivid colours, and are bold and luminous in the higheſt degree.

The ſtyle of Habbakkuk is alſo poetical; eſpecially in his ode, which indeed may be accounted among the moſt perfect ſpecimens of that claſs [11]. The like remark will alſo apply to Zephaniah; but there is nothing very ſtriking or uncommon either in the arrangement of his matter or the complexion of his ſtyle.

[11] On a very accurate peruſal of Habbakkuk, I find him a great imitator of former poets, but with ſome new additions of his own; not however in the manner of Ezekiel, but with much greater brevity, and with no common degree of ſublimity. Ezekiel, for the moſt part, through his extreme copiouſneſs, flags behind thoſe whom he imitates; Habbakkuk either riſes ſuperior, or at leaſt keeps on an equality with them. M.

Of Obadiah there is little to be ſaid; the only ſpecimen of his genius extant being very ſhort, and the greater part of it included in one of the prophecies of Jeremiah [12]. Jonah and Daniel, I have already conſidered as mere hiſtorical commentaries.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, are the only remaining prophets. The firſt of theſe is altogether proſaic, as well as the greater part of the ſecond; towards the concluſion of the prophecy there are ſome poetical paſſages, and thoſe highly ornamented; they are alſo perſpicuous, conſidering that they are the production of the moſt obſcure of all the prophetic writers [13]. The laſt of the prophetical books, that of Malachi, is written in a kind of middle ſtyle, which ſeems to indicate that the Hebrew poetry, from the time of the Babyloniſh captivity, was in a declining ſtate, and being paſt its prime and vigour, was then faſt verging towards the debility of age.

[12] Compare OB. 1—9. with JER. xlix. 14, 15, 16, 7, 9, 10.

[13] See chap. ix. x. and the beginning of xith.

Thus

Thus far I have thought proper to deliver my ſentiments, as diſtinctly as I was able, concerning the writings of the prophets, and thoſe parts which are to be accounted poetical or otherwiſe. This I did with a view of clearly explaining my conjecture (for I dare not dignify it with any higher appellation) concerning the Prophetic Poetry. A conjecture, which, though I will confeſs it is not without its difficulties, and which muſt, after all, depend in ſome degree upon opinion, yet I flatter myſelf, you will concur with me in admitting not to be utterly deſtitute of foundation.

I ſhould now, according to the nature of my plan, proceed to ſpeak of the Prophetic Poetry of the Greeks, if indeed any thing had been tranſmitted to us, even from their moſt celebrated oracles, deſerving, I will not ſay, to be compared with the ſacred prophets, but even to be mentioned at all. The fact is, there is no ſuch poem now extant, nor do I believe there ever was one of that kind among the Greeks: a few verſes there are indeed remaining, and thoſe not above mediocrity; for the Pythian Apollo, if we may credit the Greeks themſelves, was not always

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upon the beſt terms with the Muſes [14]. It appears, therefore, that he did not fail to excite the ridicule of ſenſible perſons, not only for his ambiguous and enigmatical divinations, but for ignorance in the art of verſification: nay, even the rude and ſuperſtitious, who gave him the ampleſt credit for the veracity of his predictions, could not help confeſſing, that he was a very indifferent poet [15]. Among

[14] "I find too that ſome of the Oracles of Apollo "have not eſcaped ridicule in this reſpect, though the "obſcurity of prophecy renders them in general ſo dif-"ficult to decypher, that the hearers have no leiſure to "beſtow on an examination of the metre." Merc. in LUCIAN's Dial. entitled *Jupiter Tragœdus*.

"A reſponſe from an Oracle in verſe having been re-"cited by one of the company—I have often wondered "(ſaid Diogenianus) at the meanneſs and imperfection of "the verſes which conveyed the oracular reſponſes; eſpe-"cially conſidering that Apollo is the preſident of the "Muſes, and one ſhould imagine, would no leſs intereſt "himſelf in the ſtyle of his own predictions, than in the "harmony of Odes and other Poetry: beſides, that he "certainly muſt be ſuperior to Homer and Heſiod in poe-"tic taſte and ability. Notwithſtanding this, we find "many of the Oracles, both as to ſtyle and metre, de-"ficient in proſody, and in every ſpecies of poetical "merit." PLUTARCH *Inq. why the Pythia now ceaſes to deliver her Oracles in verſe.*

[15] Juſt as the Biſhop's obſervation is, concerning the prophetic Oracles of the Greeks, yet whoever will be at

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Among the literature of the Romans, however, there is extant a much celebrated, and indeed admirable poem of this kind, no leſs remarkable for the elegance and perſpicuity of the ſtyle, than for the obſcurity and darkneſs of the ſubject: I ſpeak of the fourth Eclogue of Virgil [16], which it would be inexcuſeable to paſs unnoticed in this place, ſince from the firſt ages of Chriſtianity an opinion has prevailed, that this poem bore ſome remote relation to thoſe genuine remains of prophecy, which have been the ſubject of this Lecture, and indeed that the ſubſtance of it was originally derived from ſome ſacred fountain. The manner in which this could happen, I muſt confeſs, is not very eaſy to be explained: whether to account for the fact we have

the trouble of conſidering the predictions of Caſſandra, in the Agamemnon of Æſchylus, may eaſily perceive a peculiarity of imagery and ſtyle that would throw ſome light on the ſubject itſelf, as well as ſerve to illuſtrate the prophetic phraſeology of the Hebrews. S. H.

[16] The prophecy of the Sibyl in the vith Æneid might alſo be referred to as an example; in it the prophetic extacy is ſo admirably expreſſed, that the art and imitative powers of Virgil may contribute not a little to enable us underſtand the language and manner of true prophecy. M.

recourſe to the ancient Greek tranſlation of the Scriptures, the publication of which was certainly many years anterior to the Roman poet; or whether we ſuppoſe that the author might apply to thoſe tranſlations, which were made from the ſacred writings by ſome Helleniſtic Jews, and which were handed about as the prophecies of the Sibyls [17]. However this may have been, there are ſo many, and ſo manifeſt indications of the fact in the poem itſelf, that no perſon who reads it attentively can retain a doubt upon this head. The ſentiments, the imagery, even the language itſelf has ſo direct an agreement with the ſacred prophets; the ſubject has ſo much of intrinſic ſublimity and magnificence; and on the other hand it is enlivened with ſo much boldneſs and ſpirit, is indeed ſo free and elevated, that conſidering it as the production of the chaſteſt and moſt reſerved of all the later poets, there is ſomething altogether myſterious in the fact, unleſs we ſuppoſe that he deduced his materials from ſome higher ſource than his own genius. Though

[17] See Biſhop CHANDLER's *Vindication of the Chriſtian Religion*, chap. i. and GROTIUS on MATT. ii. 1.

the

the ſubject has engaged the attention of ſome of the firſt literary characters in the world, the motive, the ſcheme, the intention of the poet ſtill remains, and I fear ever will remain undeveloped. The hiſtory and ſtate of the Roman commonwealth at the time point out no circumſtance or character, which appears to bear a ſufficient relation to the ſubject, or which could afford room for ſuch great and magnificent predictions [18]. This I will

[18] The learned are generally agreed, that the Eclogue in queſtion cannot relate to Saloninus, a ſon of Pollio, born after the capture of Salona, who is ſpoken of by Servius, if any ſuch perſon ever exiſted, ſince it appears from Dion and Appian, that the expedition of Pollio to Illyricum took place in the following year. Some have conjectured, that this poem relates to C. Aſinius Gallus, a ſon of the ſame perſon, and indeed with much greater appearance of probability; ſince Aſconius Pedianus reports, that he had heard from Gallus himſelf, that this poem was compoſed in honour of him. See SERV. *ad Eclog.* iv. 11. But Servius himſelf affirms, that Gallus was born in the preceding year, while Pollio was conſul elect: and although ſuch a boaſt might very well agree with the vanity of a man, who, Auguſtus himſelf ſaid, would be deſirous of acquiring the ſovereignty after his death, though unequal to it; (TACIT. *An.* i. 13.) yet it is ſcarcely probable, that any poet, in common prudence, would predict any thing ſo magnificent of a ſon of Pollio. Further,

will freely confeſs, that the more I have contemplated this extraordinary production in

Further, why has he foretold this divine ſon to him conſul only, and not as a father? which would have reflected much more honour on Pollio. Many, from theſe difficulties, have attributed the poet's compliment to Cæſar Octavius and to ſome child born in his family, as the certain heir to the empire. Julia, Marcellus, and Druſus, have all been mentioned. As to Druſus, neither his age nor perſon correſpond to the prediction; and though the age of Marcellus might ſuit it better, yet the perſonal diſagreement is the ſame. With reſpect to Julia, the daughter of Octavius, there can be no objection upon either account, if the Eclogue were written during the pregnancy of Scribonia, and that it was written before her delivery is credible from the invocation it contains to Lucina: "O, chaſte Lucina, aid!"—But let it be remembered by thoſe who adopt any of theſe hypotheſes, who, and in what ſtation Octavius then was; not emperor and Auguſtus, the ſovereign Lord of the whole Roman empire, all which dignities became his only after the battle of Actium, nine years poſterior to the date of this Eclogue; but a triumvir, equal only in authority with Antony at leaſt, not to ſpeak of Lepidus. How then could the poet preſume to predict to any ſon of Octavius, if at that time any ſon had been born to him, the ſucceſſion to the empire? But, if we ſhould even grant what is really true, that no perſon more worthy or more proper could be found, or to whom theſe predictions would be better ſuited, than to ſome of the deſcendants of Octavius; and if even we ſhould ſuppoſe that a ſon of his was at that time in being, ſtill there is

one

this point of view, the leſs able I have felt myſelf to comprehend it. There is ſuch a ſplendour

one argument ſufficient to overturn the whole, and that is, that the Eclogue is inſcribed to Pollio; for at that time, and even for ſome time after, Pollio was of the party of Antony, and in oppoſition to Octavius. Let us with this in our minds take a ſummary view of the actions of Pollio, after the death of Julius Cæſar; and let us pay ſome attention to the chronology of the times. In the year of Rome 711, C. Aſinius Pollio having conducted the war againſt Sextus Pompeius, on his return from Spain delivered over his army to Antony, after his flight from Mutina. In the year 713, Pollio held Ciſalpine Gaul, as Antony's lieutenant; and along with Ventidius hovered about the rear of Salvidienus, the lieutenant of Octavius, who was attempting to annoy Lucius Antonius: Lucius being beſieged at Peruſia, Pollio in vain attempted his relief, and afterwards retired to Ravenna: he held Venetia a long time ſubject to Antony; and after having performed great actions in that part of the world, joined Antony, bringing over with him, at the ſame time, Domitius Ænobarbus, and the fleet under his command. About the end of the year 714, the peace of Brunduſium took place, the negociators of which were Pollio as conſul, on the part of Antony, and Mæcenas on the part of Octavius, and Cocceius on the part of both, as their common friend; and about this time the ivth Eclogue of Virgil was written. In the year 715, Antony ſent Pollio as his lieutenant againſt the Parthini into Illyricum; who triumphed over them in the month of October. Thus far VELLEIUS, APPIAN, and DIO. About this time a private

ſplendour of ſtyle, ſuch an elegance in the verſification, as deceives us at firſt reſpecting the

private diſagreement took place between Pollio and Octavius; and Octavius wrote ſome indecent verſes against Pollio. MACROB. SATURN. ii. 14. From this time to the battle of Actium, which happened in 723, in the beginning of September, Pollio kept himſelf perfectly neutral, and took no part in the conteſt between Antony and Octavius. "I muſt not omit," ſays VELLEIUS, ii. 86. "a remarkable action and ſaying of Aſinius Pollio. After "the peace of Brunduſium" (he ſhould have ſaid after his triumph) "he continued in Italy, nor did he ever ſee "the queen, or, after the mind of Antony became enfee-"bled by his deſtructive paſſion, take any part in his af-"fairs; and when Cæſar requeſted him to accompany "him to the battle of Actium: The kindneſſes, ſaid he, "which I have rendered Antony are greater in reality "than thoſe he has rendered me, but the latter are better "known to the world. I will withdraw myſelf entirely "from the conteſt, and I ſhall become the prey of the "conqueror." From conſidering theſe facts, it appears to me altogether incredible, that Virgil ſhould ſend, and inſcribe to Pollio, a poem in praiſe of Octavius, and wholly written in celebration of his family.

Author's Note.

Whoever will compare the three prophecies of Iſaiah contained in the ſecond, eleventh, and ſixty-fifth chapters, with the fourth Eclogue of Virgil, can hardly doubt: whether the ſame images, united in combinations oppoſite to the analogies of nature, applied to ſimilar ſubjects, and by both writers in the way of prediction, muſt not have

ultimately

obſcurity of the matter. But on a nearer inſpection of each particular, on a thorough examina-

ultimately originated in one common ſource, and the latter have been derived from the former. If ſo, the agreement in queſtion may be rationally accounted for, eſpecially if it appear that the Poet has himſelf referred to the Jewiſh Scriptures, as the fountain of ſuch images, in the ſame manner as to the writings of Homer, &c. for others of Grecian origin. [See GEORGIC. B. iii. l. 12. and the Notes on Vathek, p. 269.]—It ſeems, however, by his Lordſhip's conceſſion, that the myſtery would be in a great meaſure ſolved, could it once be ſhewn, that the prophecy of Virgil were applicable to any child whoſe birth was expected at the time of his writing, different from him whom the Prophet had foretold. —— His Lordſhip having ſcouted the pretenſions of Servius and others in favour of any ſon of Pollio, and remarked that the Poet's prophecy would neither ſuit the age nor ſituation of Druſus or Marcellus, readily admits its congruity ſo far as a *ſon* is concerned, to the child with which Scribonia was at that time pregnant. Here the difficulty with his Lordſhip begins. For, how, conſidering the ſituation of Octavius at this period, could *his* child be the ſubject of ſuch a prediction?—Why, in predicting the future greatneſs of a ſon of Octavius, ſhould Virgil addreſs his prediction to Pollio?—And, ſuppoſing theſe difficulties ſolved, how can the imagery of the prediction itſelf be reconciled to the ſubject of it?

Let us take each queſtion in its order. 1. In ſtating the ſituation of Octavius, his Lordſhip has unwarily admitted a ſucceſſion of facts, which, being poſterior to the time

examination of the nature and force of it imagery and diction, ſo many things occur totally

time when the Eclogue was written, could not have been foreknown by Virgil, and therefore ought not to be brought into queſtion. In the year 714, when all the horrors of a civil war were impending over Italy, a reconciliation was ſuddenly effected between Antony and Octavius, at the intervention of Pollio, Mæcenas and Cocceius Nerva. The reſult of this treaty was a partition of the Roman world between Octavius and Antony (for Lepidus they regarded as a cypher). When the ratification of this agreement was confirmed, and Antony departed to his province, nothing was left in the weſt to thwart the aims of Octavius, but what might ariſe from Pompey, who ſtill commanded a fleet. To guard againſt any obſtacle from this quarter, Octavius, inſtead of attempting, as had been projected with his colleague, to cruſh Pompey by violence, choſe rather to conciliate his friendſhip. With this view therefore (as the marriage of Octavia with Antony had appeaſed her huſband and brother) Octavius married Scribonia, the ſiſter of Pompey's wife; and the expedient, for a ſhort time, was not without effect. When this Eclogue then was written, Octavius was maſter of Italy and that part of the empire which, under its own name, comprehended the world. At peace with his colleagues abroad, having nothing to apprehend at home, and inveſted with abſolute power to compoſe thoſe commotions by which the empire had been ſo lately convulſed, what might not Octavius hope—or what might not the flattery of a Poet, who in circumſtances leſs favourable had ſtiled him a God, now prompt his aſpiring mind,

and,

totally different from the general faſhion of the Roman authors, ſo altogether foreign to the

and, on the ground of a divine prediction, to expect would be the future greatneſs of his ſon?

But, 2, it is aſked: Why Virgil on ſuch an occaſion ſhould addreſs this prediction to Pollio, who had been not the friend of Octavius, but of Antony?

In anſwer to this inquiry, it may be obſerved, that the private miſunderſtanding, which his Lordſhip has alledged to have ariſen between Pollio and Octavius, a year or more *after* Pollio had been conſul, is totally beſide the queſtion; except as it ſerves to ſhew that, from the peace at Brundiſium till the riſe of this diſagreement, Octavius and Pollio were friends. But whatever political enmity might have exiſted between them prior to that treaty, they were both unanimous in the patronage of genius. It was whilſt Pollio held the territory of Venice for Antony, that his acquaintance with Virgil commenced; and as the ſplendour of the Poet's talents, which broke through the obſcurity and depreſſion of his condition, had attracted the notice of Pollio; ſo, by his means, they obtained the favour of Octavius: for it is agreed on all hands, that Pollio either in perſon, or by the intervention of ſome friend (perhaps Varus, ſee Ecl. IX.) brought Virgil to the knowledge of Octavius; who reſtored to him his patrimony which the ſoldiers had uſurped. Yet, widely as Octavius and Pollio might have differed before the treaty of pacification, there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe them, after its confirmation, upon any other than an intimate footing; at leaſt, till that *private* miſunderſtanding to which his Lordſhip has adverted. Now, what could be more natural,

the conceptions of the people of that age and nation, that it is not eaſy to believe it

tural, what more conſiſtent with the niceſt addreſs, than that Virgil, whoſe poetic talents had firſt procured him the protection of Pollio, and by his means the munificence of Octavius, ſhould offer through his firſt patron, who was not only at this time conſul, but had been chiefly inſtrumental, by negociating the peace, to the eſtabliſhment of Octavius in power, a poetic compliment to his greater benefactor, on a prediction believed to point out his ſon?

Having thus anſwered two of the queſtions propoſed, it remains to conſider the 3d. Virgil, in the firſt Eclogue, which was written on regaining his eſtate, confines himſelf chiefly to his own concerns and thoſe of his Mantuan neighbours, but in the preſent his voice is raiſed to a loftier ſtrain. The *arbuſta humileſque myricæ* are the concerns of private life contraſted with *Sylvæ*, ſuch as belong to the empire at large: thus, Rome is ſaid in the firſt Eclogue "to rear her head as high above other cities, as the tall "cypreſs above the lowly ſhrubs."—*Si canimus ſylvas*, &c. "if woods be my theme, let the *woods* be worthy of a "conſul." This imagery is by no means caſual; for we learn from Suetonius (Jul. Cæſ. c. xix.) that the woods had been lately made a conſular care.—*Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas*: "The laſt age of the Cumæan pro-"phecy is now come." It is highly deſerving of notice, that Cicero, in his treatiſe on Divination, has not only referred to the Sibylline verſes as containing a divine prediction of ſome future king, but alſo mentioned an expectation that the interpreter of them would apply that prediction, in the ſenate, to Cæſar. This prophecy had poſſibly

was perfectly underſtood even on its firſt publication. But when a foreign interpretation,

ſtly its origin in the Jewiſh Scriptures, and it is not unlikely that the partiality of Julius towards the Jews, might have concurred with other circumſtances to point the application. But however this were, an expectation had been long prevalent in the Eaſt of an extraordinary perſonage, who was to eſtabliſh univerſal empire; and the prediction whence this expectation aroſe, was probably brought to Rome, by the perſons whom the Senate had deputed, to ſearch in different countries for prophetic verſes, to ſupply the loſs of thoſe which had periſhed in the capitol. Such however is the affinity between the prediction ſpoken of by Cicero, and that which Tacitus (Hiſt. V. 13.) has referred to the Jewiſh Scriptures, as to leave no room for ſurprize if we ſee Virgil, from the notion of both having a common aim, adopt the one to adorn the other; for, as the former was thought applicable to Julius, and the latter to Veſpaſian or his ſon, why might not Virgil conſolidate both, and apply them to the ſon of Octavius? And if Tacitus were acquainted with the Jewiſh Scriptures, why might not Virgil be alſo? His writings ſhew that his reſearches were univerſal, and upon every principle of juſt conſtruction, if *the* MUSES and *the* AONIAN *mount* be emblematical of *the* GRECIAN *poeſy*, his IDUMÆAN *palms* muſt equally ſignify the *poetic ſcriptures of the* JEWS. [See Georg. iii. 12.]—*Ultima ætas*, &c. "the laſt age of the Cumæan prediction is now "come." Whatever were the particulars of this prediction, the *time* ſet for its completion coincides with *that* in the Scriptures. [The Sibylline oracles in their preſent

tation, ſuggeſted by the writings of the I... brews (the full force and importance of which

it

condition, by the way, are ſo ſophiſticated, that no ſtr... can be reſted on their teſtimony without the ſuppo... of collateral proof. It will, however, deſerve to be conſidered; If the Heathens were ever in poſſeſſion of a genuine prophecy, which came not from the Jews or the Chriſtians?] *Magnus*, &c. "The great order of ages "again begins: the Virgin is already returning: the "Saturnian rule returns." This commencement of the ages perfectly agrees with Iſaiah, who ſtyles the child he foretels, "the Father of ages." By the return of Aſtræa, Virgil alludes to the juſtice he had himſelf experienced at the hands of Octavius. The renewal of the Saturnian rule will be beſt explained by referring to the Poet's account of its former ſtate:

"He [*Saturn*] by juſt laws embodied all the train,
"Who roam'd the hills, and drew them to the plain:
"There fix'd; and Latium call'd the new abode,
"Whoſe friendly ſhores conceal'd the latent God.
"Theſe realms in peace the monarch long controll'd,
"And bleſs'd the nations with an age of gold."

Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto: "A new progeny "is now ſent down from high heaven." *Sent down* in oppoſition to the manner of Saturn's deſcent:

"—Saturn fled before victorious Jove,
"*Driven down*, and baniſh'd from the realms above."

The aid of Lucina is invoked in favour, *naſcenti puero*, "of the boy when he comes to the birth." It is not impro-

it is impoſſible the poet himſelf could have comprehended) ſerves to unravel the difficulties,

improbable that Virgil was induced to transfer the Sibylline prediction from Julius, in whom it had palpably failed, to this expected ſon of Octavius, from Iſaiah's having dwelt ſo minutely on the infancy of the perſon foretold.—*Quo ferrea primum*, &c. "with whom the iron age (or "*age of war*) ſhall ceaſe, and the golden age ſhall riſe "over the world." Though Virgil, when Scribonia, inſtead of a ſon, was delivered of a daughter, diſcovered his miſtake as to the PERSON *predicted*, he ſtill continued confident in reſpect to the *events*, and therefore when he reſumed the prophecy, from a perſuaſion that he could not a ſecond time err, he makes the Sibyl herſelf point out Auguſtus as the perſon ſo often promiſed;

"Hic Cæſar, & omnis Iüli
"Progenies, magnum cœli ventura ſub axem.
"Hic vir, hic eſt, tibi quem promitti ſæpius audis,
"Auguſtus Cæſar, Divi genus aurea condet
"Secula qui rurſus Latio, regnata per arva
"Saturno quondam; ſuper & Garamantas & Indos
"Proferet imperium, &c." ÆN. vi. line 179.

"Turn, turn thine eyes! ſee here thy race divine,
"Behold thy own imperial Roman line:
"Cæſars with all the Julian name ſurvey;
"See where the glorious ranks aſcend to day!—
"This—this is he! the chief ſo long foretold,
"To bleſs the land where Saturn rul'd of old,
"And give the Latian realms a ſecond age of gold!

ties, and to enlighten all the obſcuriti . . this extraordinary poem; when I conſi . . this

" The promis'd prince, Auguſtus the divine,
" Of Cæſar's race, and Jove's immortal line!
" This mighty chief, this empire ſhall extend
" O'er Indian realms, to earth's remoteſt end."

Till, however, a daughter was born, Virgil remained undeceived. The mention of the golden age riſing again over the world, is ſufficient proof that the Virgin before deſcribed as returning was Aſtræa, and as in the Georgics he aſſerts, that her lateſt footſteps on earth, were diſcernible in rural retreats:

——— ——— ———" laſt with you
" Juſtitia linger'd, ere ſhe quite withdrew."

So by adding, "Apollo now reigns," he ſeems to intimate, that the powers of poetry had triumphed over oppreſſion, and procured him the interpoſition of juſtice, in the reſtoration of his paſture and flocks. But though this interpretation may agree with the context, the tenth verſe will admit of a fuller ſenſe. After invoking aid from Lucina, it is added, "thy own Apollo now reigns," that is, *the Sibylline prediction is begun to be fulfilled.* As Apollo was the God of prophecy, it was in reference to his reigning under this character that Lucina is invoked to aſſiſt in the fulfilment of the prediction himſelf had inſpired, by granting to the child a propitious birth.—[It is well known, that Auguſtus afterward affected to be patronized by Apollo, to reſemble him, to aſſume his dreſs, to be thought his ſon, and to pay him divine honours as his tutelary deity; now what better account of ſo extraordinary a conduct

this, I own I am at a loſs at what point to ſtop the licentiouſneſs of conjecture upon this

conduct can be given, than that all was done with the view of arrogating to himſelf the Sibyl's prediction, which Virgil in the Æneid has appropriated to him?]—*Teque adeo*, &c. "And in thy conſulſhip, O Pollio, in thine, "ſhall the glory of this age begin to commence, and "the great months thence to proceed." "The glory "of this age (the *age predicted*) ſhall begin to com- "mence." It was in the conſulſhip of Pollio that the marriage of Octavius to Scribonia took place, the *great months* therefore are *the months of her pregnancy*, which immediately followed her marriage.—*Te duce*, &c. "Un- "der your management, if any veſtiges of our wicked- "neſs remain, they ſhall be effaced, and the world deli- "vered." This plainly refers to the influence of Pollio in negociating the treaty at Brundiſium, and alſo to the further exertion of his conſular power.—*Ille Deûm vitam accipiat*, &c. "He ſhall receive the life of gods," &c. Similar, though ſtill bolder, expreſſions are applied to Auguſtus, in the firſt Georgic, verſe the 24th.—*Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem*. "And ſhall govern "the world at peace, with his FATHER's virtues." To whom could this apply, but a ſon of Octavius, and the ſon whom, it was believed, the prediction had foretold? Hence follows the deſcription of the golden age correſponding with the imagery of Iſaiah, to verſe 26. *At ſimul*, &c. "But as ſoon as thou ſhalt be able to read the "praiſes of heroes, and the atchievements of thy father, "and to underſtand what the energy of virtue can effect, "the ſpacious field ſhall by degrees become yellow with

this ſubject: and indeed what imagination occaſionally ſuggeſts, I dare ſcarcely expreſs. I will

" the ſoft ear." That is, before you be old enough to view thoſe plains which have ſo lately been the theatre of heroiſm and horror, the devaſtations of civil diſcord ſhall gradually diſappear, and the tranquil occupations of huſbandry imperceptibly change their face. *Pauca tamen ſuberunt priſcæ veſtigia fraudis*, &c. " But there ſhall re- " main beneath the ſurface ſome traces of ancient fraud," &c. This obviouſly alludes to Pompey, who ſtill retained the command of his fleet; whilſt " the other wars" ſeem to imply the conteſts to be looked for in the Eaſt, whither Antony was gone, and who therefore, in compliment to Pollio, is ſtiled " another Achilles." The Poet after this reſumes the images expreſſive of the golden age as before. *—Care Deum ſoboles, magnum Jovis incrementum*, &c. " O " beloved offſpring of the Gods, great increaſe of Jove!" &c. is not only conſonant to the language of ſcriptural prediction, but in the ſenſe of Virgil ſuitable to none but a Cæſar. See the 6th Æneid and 2d Georgic before referred to.

There are ſeveral other paſſages of the Eclogue which, in this attempt at illuſtration, have been omitted, for the ſake of brevity, although they would have reflected additional light on the interpretation which is here offered. Such images of the Poet as approach the neareſt to thoſe of the Prophet are alſo purpoſely paſſed over; becauſe, both in Virgil and Iſaiah, they have no ſpecific deſtination, but are uſed as generally ſymbolical of innocence and happineſs; and that this was the more obvious mode of explaining the prophetic ſcriptures is certain, for the Jews, from

I will only ſay, the fact has ſomething in it ſo extraordinary, ſo miraculous to my conceptions,

from thoſe very images in the Prophet, have conſtantly inferred, that their promiſed Meſſiah would be a *temporal Saviour!*

But there will be no neceſſity to enlarge on this head; for notwithſtanding what is advanced in the Lecture, on the incongruity of Virgil's language to his ſubject, upon any other idea than that of a myſterious relation to the Meſſiah and his kingdom, it is the voluntary conceſſion of his Lordſhip in the note, "that no perſon could "be any where found more worthy of this prophetic Ec-"logue, nor whom it would more aptly fit, or with "whom its contents would better quadrate, than a ſon of "Octavius, provided it could be ſhewn that a *ſon* was "born to him, in the year when Pollio was conſul." Now though it be impoſſible to ſupply the proof which his Lordſhip requires, yet ſo far as the ſpirit of the poſtulate is concerned, a ſatisfactory anſwer can be given. For notwithſtanding upon my hypotheſis (which perfectly harmonizes with the hiſtory of facts) Octavius had no child, till the year *after* Pollio was conſul, and then only a *daughter*; yet, as Scribonia became pregnant in the conſulſhip of Pollio, and the Eclogue was written in that very year, Virgil (whatever the coincidences of the time with the Sibylline prediction might have led him to expect) certainly could not know, without the gift of preſcience, the ſex of this unborn child.

I am duly ſenſible that an apology is neceſſary to the Reader for ſo long a detention from the Lectures that follow; but as (notwithſtanding his Lordſhip's opinion, that

conceptions, that I am ſometimes half inclined to fancy, that what Socrates, in the Io of Plato, ſays (probably in his uſual tone of irony) of poets in general, might have actually come to paſs: "Hence," ſays the philoſopher, "the God, having by poſſeſſing "their minds deprived them of their na- "tural reaſon, makes uſe of them, as well "as of the prophets and diviners, as his "miniſters, to the end, that we who hear "them ſhould underſtand, that matters of "ſo great importance are not uttered by "men in their ſober ſenſes, but that it is "the God himſelf who utters them, and "addreſſes us by their mouths."

"though the ſubject has engaged the attention of ſome of "the firſt literary characters in the world; the motive, "the ſcheme, the intention of the Poet ſtill remains un- "developed;") the ſubject does not ſeem to have been hitherto diſcuſſed with the preciſion it deſerved, I was willing to ſubmit it to the public in a new point of view, with the hope, that what appeared convincing to myſelf, might be favourably received by others. S. H.

Perhaps a ſtill more deciſive objection againſt the hypotheſis to which Mr. H. alludes is, that the very prophecies, from which Virgil has apparently copied his imagery, do not ſeem to have any relation to the *firſt* coming of the Meſſiah, but ſeem wholly to relate to that triumphant *ſecond* coming, which is yet unaccompliſhed. T.

LEC-

LECTURE XXII.

OF THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE HEBREW ELEGY; AND OF THE LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

The nature and origin of the Hebrew Elegy traced into the ſolemn expreſſions of grief exhibited in their funeral ceremonies.—The office and function of profeſſed mourners: the dirges, which were ſung by them, were ſhort, metrical, and ſententious; many of the lamentations, which are extant in the Prophets, were compoſed in imitation of them. —The whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah conſtructed upon the ſame principle.—The general conduct and form of that poem; the nature of the verſe; the ſubject and the ſtyle.

THAT Poetry is indebted for its origin to the more vehement affections of the human mind, has been, I apprehend, very clearly evinced. The diſtribution of it into its different ſpecies is not, however, exactly regulated by the nature and order of the paſſions; though I think this is a circumſtance which ought not entirely to be diſregarded. There are, indeed, ſome ſpecies of poetry which admit of every paſſion, ſuch as the Lyric; and there are ſome which

ſcarcely admit of any, ſuch as the Didactic: there are others, however, which are peculiarly adapted to particular paſſions, tragedy for inſtance; and we have already had occaſion to explain the nature of the paſſions which are congenial to the prophetic Muſe. There is a diſtinct ſpecies of poetry, which is appropriated ſolely to one particular paſſion; and, what is worth remarking, we have never known a people, who might be ſaid to have made any proficiency in poetry, who had not a peculiar form of poem, invented purpoſely for the expreſſion of ſorrow, and appropriated wholly to plaintive ſubjects [1].

[1] "Λινος, originally, among the Egyptians, a *ſong* or "*ballad*." HEROD. ii. 79. "Herodotus remarks, that "this kind of ſong was very common in Phœnicia and "Cyprus. Why, therefore, may not the word λινος "(linos) be derived from the Arabic *lin*, *lenis*, to be *tender*, "*ſoft*: in Conjug. ii. to *ſoften* or *make tender*?" H.

See a note on this ſubject on Lecture xiii. and the paſſage there cited from the Oreſtes of Eurip.

ΑΙΛΙΝΟΝ ΑΙΛΙΝΟΝ αρχαν θανατῳ
Βαρβαροι λεγουσιν ΑΙ, ΑΙ,
Ασιαδι φωνᾳ.——κ. λ.

The Αιλινος (ailinos) in this paſſage, appears to be compounded of the elegiac ΑΙ (ai) and λινος (linos). If ſo, it will correſpond with the λινος (linos) mentioned by Herodotus, and referred to by Dr. Hunt in the above note. S. H.

This

This ſpecies of poem the Greeks, and moſt nations after them, diſtinguiſh by the name of Elegy: the Hebrews call it *Kinah* or *Nehi*, both which are ſignificant of ſorrow, or lamentation.

The genius and origin of this poem among the Hebrews may be clearly traced into their manner of celebrating their funeral rites. It may indeed more properly be termed the dictate of Nature than of Cuſtom, to follow to the grave the remains of a friend with grief and lamentation. The ancient Hebrews were not aſhamed of obeying the voice of nature on this occaſion, and of liberally pouring forth the effuſions of a bleeding heart. The language of grief is ſimple and unaffected; it conſiſts of a plaintive, intermitted, conciſe form of expreſſion, if indeed a ſimple exclamation of ſorrow may deſerve ſuch an appellation.

"O father! O my country! O houſe of Priam[2]!"

exclaims Andromache in the tragedy: nor leſs pathetic is the complaint of the tender father in the Sacred Hiſtory, on the loſs of

[2] CICERO Tuſc. Quæſt. lib. iii.

his beloved, though diſobedient ſon; "O "my ſon, Abſalom! O Abſalom, my ſon, "my ſon[3]!" There will not, therefore, be occaſion for any laboured diſquiſition concerning that kind of ſolemn dirge which was uſed at funerals; but ſince the ſacred writers afford many examples to this purpoſe, I ſhall ſelect one or two. The Prophet of Bethlehem brought the corpſe of the man of God, who was ſlain by the lion, back to the city, that he might mourn over him and bury him. He placed him in his own ſepulchre, and they wept over him, ſaying, "Alas, my brother[4]!" So in Jeremiah, JEHOVAH declares of Joachim, the ſon of Joſiah, king of Judah:

"They ſhall not lament him, Ah my brother, or
"ah ſiſter!
"They ſhall not lament him, Ah Lord, or ah
"his glory[5]!"

Theſe

[3] 2 SAM. xix. 4. [4] 1 KINGS xiii. 30.

[5] JER. xxii. 18. "In the text it is written הודה, with "the Arabic ſuffix, inſtead of the Hebrew; of which "many inſtances are to be found in the Scriptures. But "perhaps the letter ה may be radical, and not the prono-"minal ſuffix: *Ah Lord!* (and not *my* Lord) *ah Glory!* "*Alas!*

Theſe and ſimilar exclamations were ſufficient for the ſimple expreſſion of natural and unaffected ſorrow. But wayward grief is frequently deſirous of a more complete and oſtentatious diſplay of its feelings; it ſtudies not only its own alleviation, by publiſhing its uneaſineſs, but endeavours to incite and allure others into a ſociety in affliction. Thus when Abner fell a ſacrifice to the treachery of Joab, David not being privy to the action, and in truth extremely afflicted on account of it; yet, from the difficulty of his ſituation, and the infant ſtate of his authority, not daring to puniſh the murderer, he fulfils his duty both to himſelf and to the deceaſed in the eyes of the people, by attending the funeral in the character of chief mourner: "and he lifted up his voice and "wept at the ſepulchre, and all the people "wept with him;" and then by the united aid of poetry and muſic, he further ſtimu-

"*Alas! the vanity of regal ſplendour and majeſty!* The "LXX and the VULG. do not acknowledge the ſuffix, "either here or in the preceding-member." H. Three MSS. have חדו, according to the Maſoretic *Keri*: ſee Bib. Heb. MICHAELIS in loc. Codex Orat. 42. In the margin it has הדו. See Bib. Heb. HOUBIGANT. The LXX omit the word. *Author's Note.*

lates

lates their affliction: "and the king lamented "Abner, and said:"

Did Abner fall a mean and guilty slave?
With goary fetters were his limbs defil'd?
Lo, abject treachery snar'd th' uncautious brave;
And wily fraud his honest heart beguil'd!

"and again all the people wept over him [6]."

Thus, a certain ostentatious zeal, which frequently accompanies real sorrow, is apt to persuade men, that it is impossible to pay too much respect to the memory of departed friends; that intemperance of passion too, which is always observable in these cases, which is self-indulgent to excess, and is more inclined to irritate than to soothe; in a word, opinion or fashion, which governs and misleads the bulk of mankind, easily persuades them that it is an indispensible duty incumbent upon the living to afflict themselves for the sake of the dead. Each of these causes has contributed to establish that custom, which prevailed in Palestine, in Phrygia [7], and afterwards among the Greeks and Ro-

[6] 2 SAM. iii. 33, 34.

[7] See JOS. SCALIGER Conjectanea in Varronem de Ling. Lat. p. 76. edit. R. Steph.

mans,

mans, of engaging mercenary mourners to weep at their funerals. This office generally fell to the lot of the women, either becauſe it was ſuppoſed more congenial to the general imbecility of the female mind, or becauſe, from the flexibility and ſoftneſs of their nature, and from their tender and plaintive tone of voice, they were ſuppoſed more capable of working upon the affections. After the cuſtom was once eſtabliſhed, we find no ſcarcity of theſe profeſſional mourners, well accompliſhed in all the diſcipline of lamentation and woe, and with tears always at command for a reaſonable ſtipend. As in all other arts, ſo in this, perfection conſiſted in the exact imitation of nature. The funereal dirges were therefore compoſed in general upon the model of thoſe complaints which flow naturally and ſpontaneouſly from the afflicted heart: the ſentences were abrupt, mournful, pathetic, ſimple, and unembelliſhed; on one account, indeed, more elaborate and artificial, becauſe they conſiſted of verſe, and were chanted to muſic [8].

[8] See MATT. ix. 23. and LIGHTFOOT Exercitat. Hebr. and Talmud. in locum.

Many

Many veſtiges of this cuſtom are found in the writings of the Prophets: for the predictions of calamity impending over ſtates and empires are often replete with elegance, and generally aſſume the form of a funereal ſong. But this remark will be more clearly evidenced by a few examples; and theſe examples will ſerve at the ſame time to illuſtrate what has been alledged concerning this cuſtom. Hear, [9] ſays the prophet Amos, addreſſing the Iſraelites, and denouncing vengeance and deſtruction againſt them, and their government,

Hear my voice, O Iſrael, hear!
Whilſt I thy fate deplore:
Thy virgin daughter, Sion! falls—
She falls to riſe no more!

And a little after [10];

Through the ſtreets, and through the plains,
The doleful rumour flies;
And ſkilful mourners raiſe their voice
In ſad-funereal cries.

[9] AMOS v. 1, 2.

[10] Ib. v. 16. The particle כִּי in the laſt clauſe ought probably to be placed at the beginning of that clauſe. So the SYR. and VULG. read it. See CAPELL. *Sac. Crit.* B. iv. C. xiii. i. *Author's Note.*

And

And in Jeremiah, on a ſimilar occaſion, JEHOVAH of Hoſts thus addreſſes his people [11]:

Let thoſe well-taught in Sorrow's ſchool
Reſound the notes of woe;
And mournful muſic, through the land,
In ſolemn concord flow;
Till tears ſhall ſtream from every eye,
Till every heart ſhall fear.——
Hark, 'tis the mourner's voice that ſounds!
'Tis Sion's dirge I hear!
Vanquiſh'd, enthrall'd, to plunder giv'n,
The haughty city falls;
Shrill ſhrieks of woe aloud reſound,
While ruin ſhakes her walls.——
"We go—deſerted and forlorn,
"To rove from ſhore to ſhore;
"Theſe long-lov'd ſeats no more to view,
"Theſe pleaſant plains no more."
Yet hear!—'tis heaven's moſt high decree!
The ſolemn rites prepare!
Let Sion's daughters raiſe the dirge,
Replete with wild deſpair.
The regal dome, the ſacred fane,
Stern Death invades, and waſtes the land;
The pride of Iſrael ſtrews the plain,
Like ſheaves beneath the reaper's hand.

[11] JER. ix. 17—22.

Many inſtances of the ſame kind occur throughout the Prophets, in which, as in theſe, there is a direct alluſion to the inſtitution from which they originated. There are alſo many other paſſages evidently of the ſame kind, although the funeral ceremonies be not immediately referred to; and the peculiar elegance of theſe we ſhall not perceive, unleſs ſome regard be paid to the object to which they allude. The examples that I have produced are, I apprehend, ſufficient to indicate the nature and origin of this ſpecies of poetry, and to demonſtrate, that theſe artificial complaints were originally formed on the model, and expreſſed in the language of real ſorrow. Hence alſo it will be apparent, in what manner, and by what gradations, the *Kinah*, or Lamentations of the Hebrews, aſſumed the form of a regular poem: but for the further elucidation of this ſubject, it may not be improper to examine the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the moſt remarkable poem of this kind extant, according to the principles of theſe funereal compoſitions; for unleſs we examine it in this manner, and by this criterion, it will be impoſſible

impoſſible to form a right judgment concerning it.

I ſhall endeavour to treat of this extraordinary production in the following order: Firſt, of its nature and form in general; ſecondly, of the metre or verſification; and laſtly, of the ſubject, the ſentiments, and imagery.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah (for the title is properly and ſignificantly plural) conſiſt of a number of plaintive effuſions, compoſed upon the plan of the funeral dirges, all upon the ſame ſubject, and uttered without connexion as they roſe in the mind, in a long courſe of ſeparate ſtanzas. Theſe have afterwards been put together, and formed into a collection or correſpondent whole. If any Reader, however, ſhould expect to find in them an artificial and methodical arrangement of the general ſubject, a regular diſpoſition of the parts, a perfect connexion and orderly ſucceſſion in the matter, and with all this, an uninterrupted ſeries of elegance and correctneſs, he will really expect what was foreign to the Prophet's deſign. In the character of a mourner, he celebrates in plaintive ſtrains the obſequies

ſequies of his ruined country; whatever preſented itſelf to his mind in the midſt of deſolation and miſery, whatever ſtruck him as particularly wretched and calamitous, whatever the inſtant ſentiment of ſorrow dictated, he pours forth in a kind of ſpontaneous effuſion. He frequently pauſes, and, as it were, ruminates upon the ſame object; frequently varies and illuſtrates the ſame thought with different imagery, and a different choice of language; ſo that the whole bears rather the appearance of an accumulation of correſponding ſentiments, than an accurate and connected ſeries of different ideas, arranged in the form of a regular treatiſe. I would not be underſtood to inſinuate, that the author has paid no regard whatever to order or arrangement; or that tranſitions truly elegant from one ſubject, image, or character, to another, are not ſometimes to be found; this only I wiſhed to remark, that the nature and deſign of this poem (being in reality a collection of different ſentiments or ſubjects, each of which aſſumes the form of a funeral dirge) neither require, nor even admit of a methodical arrangement. The whole poem, however, may be divided into

five

five parts; in the firſt, ſecond, and fourth, the Prophet addreſſes the people in his own perſon, or elſe perſonifies Jeruſalem, and introduces that city as a character; the third part is ſuppoſed to be uttered by the chorus of Jews, repreſented by their leader [12], after the manner of the Greek tragedies: and in the fifth, the whole nation of the Jews, on being led into captivity, pour forth their united complaints to Almighty God. This laſt, as well as the others, is divided into twenty-two periods, according to the number of the letters of the alphabet; with this difference, that in the four other parts the initial letters of each period exactly correſpond with the alphabetical order. And from this circumſtance we have been enabled to form ſome little judgment concerning the Hebrew metres.

[12] Thus in ver. 14. the עמי is in the conſtructive for the abſolute form. The SYR. omits the pronoun. See a note on Lect. xiii. So alſo it appears the ſame word ought to be underſtood Ps. cxliv. 2. Compare likewiſe Ps. xviii. 48. xlvii. 4. See POCOCK *Not. in Port. Moſis*, p. 60. "LAM. iii. 14. two MSS. have עמים. And "obſerve, that in MSS. the plural ים is often expreſſed "*i*." K. *Author's Note.*

The acroſtic or alphabetical poetry of the Hebrews was certainly intended to aſſiſt the memory, and was confined altogether to thoſe compoſitions, which conſiſted of detached maxims or ſentiments without any expreſs order or connexion [13]. The ſame cuſtom is ſaid to have been prevalent, indeed is ſaid ſtill to prevail in ſome degree, among the Syrians, the Perſians, and the Arabs [14]. With how much propriety the Prophet has employed this form of compoſition, on the preſent occaſion, is evident from what has been ſaid concerning the nature of this poem. The manner and order of this kind of verſe is as follows: Each of the five parts, or grand diviſions is ſubdivided into twenty-two periods, or ſtanzas; theſe periods in the three firſt parts are all of them triplets, in

[13] M. Michaelis very juſtly remarks, that except the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the xxxviith Pſalm, none of the alphabetic poems of the Hebrews riſe in any degree above mediocrity. A certain indication, that however uſeful this kind of diſcrimination might be on ſome occaſions, in aſſiſting the memory of children and the vulgar, yet ſuch minute arts are in general inconſiſtent with true genius. T.

[14] See ASSEMAN *Bibliothec. Oriental.* Vol. III. p. 63, 180, 188, 328.

other

other words, conſiſt each of three lines, only, in each of the two former parts, there is one period conſiſting of four lines [15]. In the four firſt parts, the initial letter of each period follows the order of the alphabet; but the third part is ſo very regular, that every line in the ſame period begins with the ſame letter, ſo as neceſſarily to aſcertain the length of every verſe or line in that poem: indeed, even in the others, though the lines are not diſtinctly marked in this manner, it is no difficult matter to aſcertain their limits, by reſolving the ſentences into their conſtituent members. By this mode of computation it appears, that in the fourth part all the periods conſiſt of diſtichs [16], as alſo in the fifth, which is not acroſtic: but in this laſt part I muſt remark another peculiarity, namely, that the lines are extremely ſhort, whereas in all the reſt they are long.

The length of theſe metres is worthy of notice; we find in this poem lines or verſes,

[15] In Chap. i. 1. in Chap. ii. p.

[16] But the period o as it is now read, can neither be conveniently diſtributed into two, nor into three verſes. *Author's Note.*

which are evidently longer by almoſt one half, than thoſe which occur uſually, and on other occaſions. The length of them ſeems to be, on an average, about twelve ſyllables; there are a few which do not quite amount to that number, and there are a few which perhaps exceed it by two or three ſyllables: for although nothing certain can be determined concerning the number of ſyllables (in truth I pay no attention to the fictions of the Maſorites) there is room, nevertheleſs, for very probable conjecture. We are not to ſuppoſe this peculiar form of verſification utterly without deſign or importance: on the contrary, I am perſuaded, that the Prophet adopted this kind of metre as being more diffuſe, more copious, more tender, in all reſpects better adapted to melancholy ſubjects. I muſt add, that in all probability the funeral dirges, which were ſung by the mourners, were commonly compoſed in this kind of verſe; for whenever, in the prophets, any funereal lamentations occur, or any paſſages formed upon that plan, the verſification is, if I am not miſtaken, of this protracted kind. If this then be the caſe, we have diſcovered a true legitimate

form

form of Elegy in the poetry of the Hebrews. It ought, however, to be remarked, that the ſame kind of metre is ſometimes, though rarely, employed upon other occaſions by the ſacred Poets, as it was indeed by the Greeks and Romans. There are, moreover, ſome poems manifeſtly of the elegiac kind, which are compoſed in the uſual metre, and not in unconnected ſtanzas, according to the form of a funeral dirge.

Thus far in general as to the nature and method of the poem, and the form of the verſification; it remains to offer a few remarks concerning the ſubject and the ſtyle.

That the ſubject of the Lamentations is the deſtruction of the holy city and temple, the overthrow of the ſtate, the extermination of the people, and that theſe events are deſcribed as actually accompliſhed, and not in the ſtyle of prediction merely, muſt be evident to every reader. Though ſome authors of conſiderable reputation [17] have imagined this poem to have been compoſed on the death of king Joſiah. The Prophet, indeed, has ſo copiouſly, ſo tenderly, and poe-

[17] JOSEPHUS, JEROME, USSERIUS, &c.

tically

tically bewailed the misfortunes of his country, that he ſeems completely to have fulfilled the office and duty of a mourner. In my opinion, there is not extant any poem, which diſplays ſuch a happy and ſplendid ſelection of imagery in ſo concentrated a ſtate. What can be more elegant and poetical, than the deſcription of that once flouriſhing city, lately chief among the nations, ſitting in the character of a female, ſolitary, afflicted, in a ſtate of widowhood, deſerted by her friends, betrayed by her deareſt connections, imploring relief, and ſeeking conſolation in vain? What a beautiful perſonification is that of "the Ways of Sion mourning be-"cauſe none are come to her ſolemn feaſts?" How tender and pathetic are the following complaints?

"Is this nothing to all you who paſs along the
"way? behold and ſee,
"If there be any ſorrow, like unto my ſorrow,
"which is inflicted on me;
"Which JEHOVAH inflicted on me in the day of
"the violence of his wrath.
"For theſe things I weep, my eyes ſtream with
"water;

"Becauſe

" Becauſe the comforter is far away, that ſhould
" tranquilize my ſoul:
" My children are deſolate, becauſe the enemy
" was ſtrong [18]."

But to detail its beauties would be to tranſcribe the entire poem. I ſhall make but one remark relative to certain paſſages, and to the former part of the ſecond alphabet in particular. If, in this paſſage, the Prophet ſhould be thought by ſome to affect a ſtyle too bold and energetic for the expreſſion of ſorrow, let them only advert to the greatneſs of the ſubject, its importance, ſanctity, and ſolemnity; and let them conſider that the nature of the performance abſolutely required theſe to be ſet forth in a ſtyle ſuitable, in ſome degree at leaſt, to their inherent dignity; let them attentively conſider theſe things, and I have not a doubt, but they will readily excuſe the ſublimity of the Prophet.

[18] LAM. i. 12, and 16. In the laſt verſe the word עני is not repeated in the old tranſlations.

LECTURE XXIII.

OF THE REMAINING ELEGIES OF THE HEBREWS.

Many poems of this kind ſtill extant in the writings of the Hebrews.—One collection of Elegies or Lamentations appears to be loſt.—Elegies in Ezekiel.—Many paſſages in Job may be accounted Elegiac.—About a ſeventh part of the book of Pſalms conſiſts of Elegies.—A perfect ſpecimen of elegiac poetry from the Pſalms.—The Lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan explained: attempted in Engliſh verſe.

IN the laſt Lecture the nature and origin of the Hebrew Elegy was explained; the form and commencement of that ſpecies of poetry was traced into the ſolemn dirges which were chanted at funerals by the profeſſed mourners; and this was confirmed by inſtances taken from thoſe ſhort Elegies or Lamentations which occur in the Prophets, and by an accurate examination of that remarkable poem, the Lamentations of Jeremiah. I ſhall now treat of ſome other poems, which, although they do not exactly aſſume the form of a funereal dirge, are nevertheleſs to be comprehended in this claſs.

That

That the Hebrews were formerly poſſeſſed of ſome collection of Elegies or Lamentations, which has not been tranſmitted to us, we may underſtand from that paſſage of ſacred hiſtory [1], in which mention is made of the ſolemn mourning publicly celebrated at the funeral of Joſiah; where it appears that a poem, compoſed for the occaſion by Jeremiah the prophet, amongſt others had a place. Though the book, which is on this occaſion referred to, and which probably contained the moſt excellent of the Hebrew Elegies, appears to be loſt, there are ſtill extant many ſpecimens of this kind of poetry; whence we may reaſonably infer, that no ſpecies of compoſition was more in uſe among the Hebrews than the elegiac, the ode perhaps only excepted.

In the firſt place, beſide thoſe ſhort dirges, which occur in the writings of almoſt all the prophets, as was before remarked, there are ſome in Ezekiel, which are actually diſtinguiſhed by the title of Lamentations, and which may with the utmoſt propriety be referred to the claſs of Elegies. Among theſe

[1] 2 CHRON. XXXV. 25.

are

are the two Lamentations concerning Tyre, and the king of Tyre [2]. In theſe, though the intent of the prophet be to denounce vengeance and puniſhment againſt theſe objects of the divine wrath, rather than to lament their misfortunes; and though he ſucceed in his aim of exciting terror inſtead of pity, yet the mournful nature of the ſubject fully correſponds with the title, and both the matter and the ſentiments bear ſome degree of reſemblance to the funereal ſongs. According to the cuſtom which prevailed on thoſe ſolemn occaſions, the glory, riches, and power of the deceaſed are pompouſly enumerated; and thus by contraſting his former proſperity with the preſent calamity, the effect is conſiderably augmented. As for the two prophecies [3], in which the deſtruction of Egypt is predicted, they ſeem to have been entitled Lamentations merely from the mournful nature of the ſubject; for they contain nothing of the elegiac form or ſtyle, ſcarcely any ſentiment expreſſive of ſorrow, and ſeem altogether compoſed for the denunciation of vengeance, and the exciting of

[2] Ezek. xxvii. and xxviii. 12—19.

[3] Ezek. xxxii.

terror,

terror. Two other Lamentations [4], the one over the princes of Judah, and the other over Jeruſalem, may be explained upon ſimilar principles: they are indeed poetical parables, and have been already noticed in their proper place.

There are alſo many paſſages in that moſt admirable poem, which bears the name of Job [5], deſerving to be accounted legitimate elegies: and indeed I do not know any more perfect ſpecimens of this ſpecies of compoſition; ſo completely are the inmoſt receſſes of ſorrow diſplayed, and the remoteſt fountains of pity explored and laid open. But ſince theſe are parts of an entire poem, they are not raſhly to be detached from the body of the work; and ſince the elegant diſpoſition, and the extraordinary beauties of this inimitable compoſition, will deſerve a fuller examination, it is ſufficient in this place to have mentioned theſe paſſages as exquiſite treaſures, which the Muſe of Sorrow might legally claim as her own, were ſhe diſpoſed to aſſert her rigid rights.

[4] EZEK. xix.

[5] See JOB, chap. iii. vi. vii. x. xiv. xvii. xix. xxix. xxx.

I proceed, therefore, to the book of Pſalms, which is a collection, under the general title of hymns to the praiſe of God, containing poems of different kinds, and elegies among the reſt. If indeed the contents of the book were methodically arranged in their proper claſſes, not leſs than a ſixth or ſeventh part would appear to be elegiac. Since, however, this is a matter dependant in a great meaſure upon opinion, and not to be clearly demonſtrated upon determinate principles; ſince the nature of the ſubject, the complexion of the ſtyle, or the general form and diſpoſition of each poem, muſt decide the queſtion; and ſince different perſons will judge differently upon theſe points; it will hardly be expected that I ſhould on this occaſion proceed to the regular claſſification of them. It will indeed be more to your advantage, and more to our preſent purpoſe, to ſelect an example which may be clearly demonſtrated to belong to the elegiac claſs.

Under this appellation then I ſhall not heſitate to recommend to your notice the forty-ſecond Pſalm, ſince I cannot help eſteeming it one of the moſt beautiful ſpecimens of the Hebrew Elegy. The author of this elegant com-

complaint, exiled from the temple, and from the public exercise of his religion, to the extreme parts of Judea, persecuted by his numerous enemies, and agitated by their reproaches, pours forth his soul to God in this tender and pathetic composition. The ardent feelings of a devout heart are admirably expressed, while the memory of former felicity seems to aggravate his present anguish. The extreme anxiety of a mind, depressed by the burthen of sorrow, and yet at the same time impatient under it; overcome by an accumulation of evils, yet in some degree endeavouring to resist them, and admitting, through the dark cloud of affliction, a glimmering ray of hope and consolation, is finely depicted. In frequent and almost instantaneous transitions he glows with love, and droops with lamentation; he complains, he expostulates; he despairs, and yet hopes; he is afflicted, and again consoled. It is not to be expected that any poetical version should express these sentiments with the force, the energy, and more particularly with the conciseness of the Hebrew, which is indeed not to be imitated in any other language: though it must be confessed, that

this poem is more diffuſe than the Hebrew poetry in general. The following paraphraſe however, though infinitely ſhort of the original in ſublimity, will perhaps ſerve to evince the correſpondence of the ſubject and ſentiments of this poem, with the elegiac productions of modern times:

As pants the wearied hart for cooling ſprings,
That ſinks exhauſted in the ſummer's chaſe;
So pants my ſoul for thee, Great King of kings!
So thirſts to reach thy ſacred reſting-place.

On briny tears [6] my famiſh'd ſoul has fed,
While taunting foes deride my deep deſpair;
"Say, where is now thy great Deliverer fled?
"Thy mighty God — Deſerted wanderer,
"where?"

Oft dwell my thoughts on thoſe thrice happy days,
When to thy fane I led the jocund throng;
Our mirth was worſhip, all our pleaſure praiſe,
And feſtal joys ſtill clos'd with ſacred ſong.

[6] It ſeems odd to an Engliſh reader to repreſent *tears* as *meat* or *food*; but we ſhould remember, that the ſuſtenance of the ancient Hebrews conſiſted for the moſt part of liquids, ſuch as *broths*, *pottages*, &c. S. H.

Why

Why throb my heart? Why ſink my ſad'ning
ſoul?
Why droop to earth with various woes op-
preſs'd?
My years ſhall yet in bliſsful circles roll,
And joy be yet an inmate of this breaſt.

By Jordan's banks with devious ſteps I ſtray,
O'er Hermon's rugged rocks, and deſerts
drear:
Ev'n there thy hand ſhall guide my lonely way,
There, thy remembrance ſhall my ſpirit cheer.

In rapid floods the vernal torrents roll,
Harſh-ſounding cataracts reſponſive roar;
Thine angry billows overwhelm my ſoul,
And daſh my ſhatter'd bark from ſhore to ſhore.

Yet thy ſoft mercies, ever in my ſight,
My heart ſhall gladden through the tedious
day;
And midſt the dark and gloomy ſhades of night,
To thee I'll fondly tune the grateful lay.

Rock of my hope! Great ſolace of my heart!
Why, why deſert the offspring of thy care,
While taunting foes thus point th' invidious dart?
"Where's now thy God! abandon'd wanderer,
"where?"

Why faint my ſoul? why doubt JEHOVAH's aid?
Thy God, the God of mercy ſtill ſhall prove!
In his bright fane thy thanks ſhall yet be paid;
Unqueſtion'd be his pity and his love[7]!

Another

[7] This poem ſeems to have been compoſed by David, when he was expelled his kingdom by his rebellious ſon, and compelled to fly to the borders of Lebanon, as it is plain he did, from 2 SAM. xvii. 24, 26, 27. Undoubtedly, whoever compoſed this Pſalm was expelled from the ſacred city, and wandered as an exile in the regions of Hermon, and the heights of Lebanon, whence Jordan is fed by the melting of the perpetual ſnow, Ver. 7. let it be remembered, by the way, that David never betook himſelf to theſe places when he fled from Saul, but concealed himſelf in the interior parts of Judea. Here then he pitched his camp, protected by the ſurrounding mountains and woods; and hither the veteran ſoldiers, attached perſonally to him, and averſe to change, reſorted from every part of Paleſtine. Here alſo, indulging his melancholy, the proſpect and the objects about him, ſuggeſted many of the ideas in this poem. Obſerving the deer which conſtantly came from the diſtant vallies to the fountains of Lebanon, and comparing this circumſtance with his earneſt deſire to reviſit the temple of God, and perhaps elevating his thoughts to a higher, celeſtial temple, he commences his poem:

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
"So panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.
"My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God;
"When ſhall I enter, and appear before God!"

That

Another point, to which I would wiſh every perſon who reads this Pſalm in the original to advert, is the diviſion of the periods, and the reſolution of them into their conſtituent

That is, *enter into the temple*, from which I am now an exile. He adds a bitterer cauſe of grief than his exile, namely, the reproaches of the multitude, and the cruel taunt, that he is *deſerted of his God*, and that the Deity, of whom he had boaſted, fails to appear to his aſſiſtance, than which nothing can be more grating to an honeſt mind, and a mind conſcious of its own piety. Compare 2 SAM. xvi. 7, 8.

" My tears have been my ſuſtenance,
" By day and by night,
" While they continually ſay unto me,
" Where is now thy God?"

The repetition of the name of God raiſes in him freſh uneaſineſs, and cauſes all his wounds to bleed again: this forces him to exclaim: " I remember *God*, and I diſſolve " in tears." For ſo the word אלה ought to be tranſlated, and not according to the Maſoretic punctuation, " I re- " member *theſe things*:" ſince an obſcurity ariſes from this punctuation, and it is difficult to ſay what things are referred to.

" I remember God, and pour out myſelf in tears:
" When I went with the multitude to the temple of God,
" With the voice of joy and gladneſs, with the multitude
" leaping for joy."

tuent parts or members; he will find, I believe, that the periods ſpontaneouſly divide into verſes of nearly equal length and meaſure, exactly ſimilar to thoſe of the four firſt chapters of the Lamentations of Jeremiah; ſuch as I before remarked appeared to conſtitute the eſtabliſhed metre of the Hebrew Elegy. The whole of the nineteenth Pſalm conſiſts alſo of the ſame kind of verſe, except the Epode, which contains two long verſes of the ſame kind, and one ſhorter, which laſt is once repeated. The forty-third

He now reſtrains his tears:

"Why art thou ſo caſt down, O my ſoul?
"And why art thou ſo diſquieted within me?
"Hope thou in God, for I ſtill ſhall praiſe him."

He again breaks forth into lamentations, with which he elegantly intermingles a poetical deſcription of Lebanon. There are upon thoſe hills frequent cataracts, and, in the ſpring ſeaſon, the rivulets are uncommonly turbid by the melting of the ſnow:

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy cataracts;
"And all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me."

Theſe form the principal imagery of the poem, and I omit the reſt, leſt I ſhould fatigue the reader by the minuteneſs of criticiſm, which is both uſeleſs and impertinent, when the ſubject wants no illuſtration. M.

Pſalm

Pſalm too ſeems to be conſtructed upon ſimilar principles, containing eight of the ſame kind of verſes, with the ſame Epode. And ſince it is written in the ſame train of ſentiment, the ſame ſtyle, and even apparently in the ſame metre, it ought not perhaps to be ſeparated from the preceding Pſalm [s], but rather to be conſidered as a part or continuation of the ſame compoſition: if this be true, the whole poem conſiſts of three parts almoſt equal and alike, each of which is concluded by the ſame intercalary period or ſtanza.

[s] I find EUSEBIUS was formerly of the ſame opinion. "This Pſalm is without a title in the original, and conſequently in all the old tranſlations: there is indeed great reaſon, from the ſimilarity of thought and expreſſion in both the Pſalms, to believe that it originally made a part of the Pſalm preceding." In Ps. xliii. This conjecture receives further confirmation from the manuſcripts. "The xliid and xliiid Pſalms are united together in twenty-two MSS. The Pſalms, however, are diſtinguiſhed from each other in the MSS. rarely by the numeral letters, but chiefly by theſe two methods: either by a ſingle word placed in the vacant ſpace between them, which is uſually the breadth of one line: and this word is commonly the laſt word of the preceding, or the initial word of the ſucceeding Pſalm; or elſe by the firſt word of each Pſalm being tranſcribed in letters of a larger ſize." K. *Author's Note.*

There is another moſt beautiful poem of the elegiac kind, which on this occaſion ſolicits our attention, I mean the Lamentation of David for Saul and Jonathan [9]; which appears to have been extracted by the hiſtorian from ſome poetical book, no longer extant, entitled *Jaſher* [10]. It will not, I flatter myſelf,

[9] 2 SAM. i. 17—27.

[10] Since ſo many conjectures have been publiſhed concerning the book of *Jaſher* and its title, without coming to any certain deciſion, I will alſo, without further apology, venture to give my ſentiments upon it. The book of *Jaſher* is twice quoted, firſt in JOSH. x. 13. where the quotation is evidently poetical, and forms exactly three diſtichs:

"Sun ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon,
"And thou Moon, in the valley of Ajalon:
"And the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed her courſe,
"Until the people were avenged of their enemies.
"And the Sun tarried in the midſt of the heavens,
"And haſted not to go down in a whole day."

And afterwards in the paſſage referred to in the text, we find the above lamentation of David extracted from it. The cuſtom of the Hebrews giving titles to their books from the initial word is well known, as Geneſis is called *Bereſhit*, &c. they alſo ſometimes named the book, from ſome remarkable word in the firſt ſentence; thus the book of Numbers is ſometimes called *Bemidbar*. We find alſo in

ſelf, be thought unreaſonable to requeſt your attention, while I endeavour to inveſtigate, with ſome degree of accuracy, the nature and compoſition of this poem.

in their writings, canticles which had been produced on important occaſions, introduced by ſome form of this kind: *az jaſhar* (*then ſung*) or *ve-jaſhar peleni*, &c. thus *az jaſhir Moſheh*, "then ſung Moſes," EXOD. xv. 1. (the SAMAR. reads *jaſher*) *ve-thaſhar Deborah*, "and Deborah "ſang," JUD. v. 1. See alſo the ſame inſcription of Ps. xviii. Thus I ſuppoſe the book of *Jaſher* to have been ſome collection of ſacred ſongs, compoſed at different times and on different occaſions, and to have had this title, becauſe the book itſelf and moſt of the ſongs began in general with this word: *ve-jaſhar*. And the old SYRIAC tranſlator was certainly of this opinion, when in theſe places he ſubſtituted the word *aſhir* (he ſung); the meaning of which, ſays the ARABIC commentator, is *A book of ſongs*; in another place he himſelf explains it by a word expreſſive of *Hymns*. I, however, agree in opinion with thoſe, who ſuppoſe this Lamentation originally to have borne the title of *Keſhet* (a bow) either in memory of the ſlaughter made by the archers of the enemy, or from the *bow* of Jonathan, of which particular mention is made ver. 22. The LXX ſeem to have favoured this opinion.

"KOSH or rather *kos*, ſignifies in Arabic *to meaſure*, as "is remarked by the learned Michaelis: but I do not re-"member an inſtance of this word being uſed to ſignify "poetic meaſure (or metre)." H. *Author's Note.*

The

The Poet treats, though in no common manner, two common topics, and thoſe the beſt adapted to the genuine Elegy; that I mean, which was employed in the celebration of the funeral rites; he expreſſes his own ſorrow; and he celebrates the praiſes of the deceaſed. Both ſentiments are diſplayed in the exordium; but, as might naturally be expected, ſorrow is predominant, and burſts forth with the impetuoſity of exclamation:

" The glory of Iſrael is ſlain on the high-places:
" How are the mighty fallen!"

Grief is of a timid and ſuſpicious temper; and always ready at inventing cauſes for ſelf-torment; eaſily offended by neglect, and utterly impatient of ridicule or contempt:

" They heard that I ſighed, for there was none to
" comfort me:
" All mine enemies have heard of my calamity,
" and rejoiced that thou inflicteddſt it"."

So Jeruſalem complains in Jeremiah, exaggerating in the ſtrongeſt terms her own mis-

" LAM. i. 21.

fortunes.

fortunes. Our Poet feels and expreſſes himſelf in almoſt the ſame manner:

"Declare it not in Gath,
"Publiſh it not in the ſtreets of Aſcalon;
"Leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice,
"Leſt the daughters of the uncircumciſed
"triumph."

The ſame paſſion is alſo ſullen and querulous, wayward and peeviſh, unable to reſtrain its impatience, and firing at every thing that oppoſes it. "Would! ne'er that in the Pelian "grove"—ſays one of the characters in the Medea of Ennius[12]. On another occaſion we find a perſon inveighing againſt the innocent mountain:

"Alas! Betrayer, barren and accurſt!
"What men, what heroes haſt thou not de-
"ſtroy'd?
"Fatal alone to thoſe, whoſe patriot worth
"Their noble birth by nobleſt acts proclaim'd[13]."

[12] CICERO. De Fato. See EURIPIDES, Medea, ver. 1.

[13] Scolion apud ATHENÆUM, lib. xv. See EUSTATHIUS ad Iliad Δ. 171. Edit. ALEX. POLITI *Flo entiæ*, and HERODOT. Terpſichor, 63, 64.

Our

Our Poet is not more temperate:

" O mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew
" nor rain upon you!"

If theſe paſſages were brought before the ſevere tribunal of reaſon, nothing could appear more abſurd; but if examined by the criterion of the paſſions, nothing can be more conſonant to nature, more beautiful or emphatic. Not to refer effects to their real cauſes is in logic an imperfection, but in poetry often a beauty; the appeal in the one caſe is to reaſon, in the other to the paſſions. When ſorrow has had ſufficient vent, there is leiſure to expatiate on the accompliſhments of the dead. In the firſt place they are celebrated for their virtue and heroic actions; next for their piety and mutual affection; and laſtly for their agility and ſtrength. Saul is honoured with a particular panegyric, becauſe he had enriched his people, and contributed to the general felicity and ſplendour of the ſtate. This paſſage, by the way, is moſt exquiſite compoſition; the women of Iſrael are moſt happily introduced, and the ſubject of the encomium

comium is admirably adapted to the female characters [14]. Jonathan is at laſt celebrated in a diſtinct eulogium, which is beautifully pathetic, is animated with all the fervour, and ſweetened with all the tenderneſs of friendſhip.

[14] "Ye daughters of Iſrael weep over Saul," &c.

The following paſſage bears no remote reſemblance to this of the ſacred writer, and I think comes nearer it in ſublimity than any thing I have obſerved in modern poetry:

"Ye, who erewhile for Cook's illuſtrious brow
"Pluck'd the green laurel, and the oaken bough;
"Hung the gay garlands on the trophied oars,
"And pour'd his fame along a thouſand ſhores,
"Strike the ſlow death-bell!—weave the ſacred verſe,
"And ſtrew the cypreſs o'er his honour'd hearſe."

Miſs SEWARD'S *Elegy on Captain Cook.*

A nice ear will diſcern ſomething peculiar in the ſtructure of the *third* and *fifth* lines of this quotation. Each of theſe lines, in fact, begins with a Trochaic, followed by Spondees, which, from its abruptneſs and energy, is admirably adapted to the expreſſion of ſorrow:

Hung the gay garlands, &c.
Strike the ſlow death-bell, &c.

In this ſhort Elegy ſpecimens may be found of almoſt every poetical beauty and excellence. T.

I ſhould have made ſome particular obſervations on the intercalary period or Epode inſerted in the Pſalm which was lately under our conſideration, but that I was aware an opportunity would again preſent itſelf during the examination of this poem. This recurrence of the ſame idea is perfectly congenial to the nature of Elegy; ſince grief is fond of dwelling upon the particular objects of the paſſion, and frequently repeating them. There is ſomething ſingular, however, in the intercalary period which occurs in this poem, for it does not regularly aſſume the ſame form of words, as is the caſe in general, but appears with a little variation. It is three times introduced, beautifully diverſified in the order and diction: it forms part of the exordium, as well as of the concluſion, and is once inſerted in the body of the poem.

Another obſervation, though it merit no higher title than a conjecture, I do not heſitate to ſubmit to your conſideration. There appears to be ſomething ſingular in the verſification of this Elegy, and a very free uſe of different metres. It neither conſiſts altogether of the long verſes, nor yet of the ſhort ones (which are the moſt uſual in the poetry

poetry of the Hebrews); but rather of a very artful and happy mixture of both, ſo that the conciſe and pointed paralleliſm ſerves to correct the languour and diffuſeneſs of the elegiac verſe: and this form of verſification takes place alſo in ſome of the Pſalms. Certainly there is a great appearance of art and deſign in this nice and poetical conformation of the periods: and that no grace or elegance ſhould be wanting to this poem, it is no leſs remarkable for the general beauty, ſplendour, and perſpicuity of the ſtyle.

To do complete juſtice to the economy of this excellent production, it is abſolutely neceſſary to exhibit it in an entire ſtate. Not to tire you therefore with a repetition of the verbal tranſlation, I have endeavoured to expreſs the general ſentiments and imagery in elegiac numbers.

Thy glory, Iſrael, droops its languid head,
On Gilboa's heights thy riſing beauty dies;
In ſordid piles there ſleep th' illuſtrious dead,
The mighty victor fall'n and vanquiſh'd lies.

Yet

Yet dumb be Grief—Huſh'd be her clam'rous voice!
Tell not in Gath the tidings of our ſhame!
Leſt proud Philiſtia in our woes rejoice,
And rude barbarians blaſt fair Iſrael's fame.

No more, O Gilboa! heaven's reviving dew
With riſing verdure crown thy fated head!
No victim's blood thine altars dire imbrue!
For there the blood of heaven's elect was ſhed.

The ſword of Saul ne'er ſpent its force in air;
The ſhaft of Jonathan brought low the brave;
In life united equal fates they ſhare,
In death united ſhare one common grave.

Swift as the eagle cleaves the aerial way,
Through hoſts of foes they bent their rapid courſe;
Strong as the lion darts upon his prey,
They cruſh'd the nations with reſiſtleſs force.

Daughters of Judah mourn the fatal day,
In ſable grief attend your monarch's urn;
To ſolemn notes attune the penſive lay,
And weep thoſe joys that never ſhall return.

With various wealth he made your tents o'erflow,
In princely pride your charms profuſely dreſs'd;
Bade the rich robe with ardent purple glow,
And ſparkling gems adorn the tiſſu'd veſt.

On Gilboa's heights the mighty vanquiſh'd lies,
The ſon of Saul, the generous and the juſt;
Let ſtreaming ſorrows ever fill theſe eyes,
Let ſacred tears bedew a brother's duſt!

Thy firm regard rever'd thy David's name,
And kindeſt thoughts in kindeſt acts expreſs'd;
Not brighter glows the pure and generous flame,
That lives within the tender virgin's breaſt.

But vain the tear, and vain the burſting ſigh,
Though Sion's echoes with our griefs reſound;
The mighty victors fall'n and vanquiſh'd lie,
And war's refulgent weapons ſtrew the ground.

LECTURE XXIV.

OF THE PROVERBS, OR DIDACTIC POETRY OF THE HEBREWS.

The ancient mode of inſtructing by Parables or Proverbs.—The Proverbs of Solomon: that work conſiſts of two parts; the firſt, which extends to the ninth chapter inclusive, truly poetical, and moſt elegant in its kind: the remainder of the book conſiſts of detached maxims.—The principal characteriſtics of a Parable or Proverb; brevity (which naturally involves in it ſome degree of obſcurity) and elegance.—Eccleſiaſtes: the argument, diſpoſition, and ſtyle of that work.—All the alphabetical Pſalms of this kind, as well as ſome others.—The wiſdom of the ſon of Sirach, written originally in Hebrew, in imitation of the Proverbs of Solomon.—The fidelity of the Greek tranſlator; and the great elegance of the work in general.—The wiſdom of Solomon, written originally in Greek, and in imitation of the Proverbs; the ſtyle and economy of that book.—A new tranſlation of the xxivth chapter of Eccleſiaſticus.

IN thoſe periods of remote antiquity, which may with the utmoſt propriety be ſtyled the infancy of ſocieties and nations, the uſual, if not the only, mode of inſtruction was by detached aphoriſms or proverbs. Human wiſdom was then indeed in a rude

and

and unfiniſhed ſtate; it was not digeſted, methodized, or reduced to order and connexion. Thoſe, who, by genius and reflexion, exerciſed in the ſchool of experience, had accumulated a ſtock of knowledge, were deſirous of reducing it into the moſt compendious form, and comprized in a few maxims thoſe obſervations which they apprehended moſt eſſential to human happineſs. This mode of inſtruction was, in truth, more likely than any other to prove efficacious with men in a rude ſtage of ſociety; for it profeſſed not to diſpute, but to command; not to perſuade, but to compel; it conducted them not by a circuit of argument, but led immediately to the approbation and practice of integrity and virtue. That it might not, however, be altogether deſtitute of allurement, and leſt it ſhould diſguſt by an appearance of roughneſs and ſeverity, ſome degree of ornament became neceſſary; and the inſtructors of mankind added to their precepts the graces of harmony, and illuminated them with metaphors, compariſons, alluſions, and the other embelliſhments of ſtyle. This manner, which with other nations prevailed only during the firſt periods

of civilization, with the Hebrews continued to be a favourite ſtyle to the lateſt ages of their literature. It obtained among them the appellation of *Maſhalim* (or Parables) as well becauſe it conſiſted in a great meaſure of Parables ſtrictly ſo called; as becauſe it poſſeſſed uncommon force and authority over the minds of the auditors.

Of this Didactic Poetry there are ſtill extant many ſpecimens in the writings of the Hebrews; and among theſe the firſt rank muſt be aſſigned to the Proverbs of Solomon. This work conſiſts of two parts. The firſt, ſerving as a proem or exordium, includes the nine firſt chapters; and is varied, elegant, ſublime, and truly poetical; the order of the ſubject is in general excellently preſerved; and the parts are very aptly connected among themſelves. It is embelliſhed with many beautiful deſcriptions and perſonifications; the diction is poliſhed, and abounds with all the ornaments of poetry; inſomuch, that it ſcarcely yields in elegance and ſplendour to any of the ſacred writings. The other part, which extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter to the end of the book, conſiſts almoſt entirely of detached

parables

parables or maxims, which have but little in them of the ſublime or poetical, except a certain energetic and conciſe turn of expreſſion. Since the Didactic Poetry of the Hebrews aſſumes in general this unconnected and ſententious form, and ſince this ſtyle intrudes itſelf into almoſt all the poetry of the Hebrews, and occurs frequently in poems of a character very different from the Didactic; I ſhall treat principally of this latter part of the book of Proverbs, and endeavour more minutely to inveſtigate the preciſe nature of a parable or proverb.

Solomon himſelf, in one of his proverbs, has explained the principal excellencies of this form of compoſition; exhibiting at once a complete definition of a parable or proverb, and a very happy ſpecimen of what he deſcribes:

> "Apples of gold in a net-work of ſilver
> "Is a word ſeaſonably ſpoke[1]."

Thus he inſinuates, that grave and profound ſentiments are to be ſet off by a ſmooth and well-turned phraſeology, as the appearance

[1] Prov. xxv. 11.

of the moſt beautiful and exquiſitely-coloured fruit, or the imitation of it perhaps in the moſt precious materials, is improved by the circumſtance of ſhining, as through a veil, through the reticulations of a ſilver veſſel exquiſitely carved. Nay, he further intimates, that it is not only a neat turn and poliſhed diction which muſt recommend them, but that truth itſelf acquires additional beauty, when partially diſcovered through the veil of elegant fiction and imagery.

To conſider the ſubject in a ſtill more particular point of view, let brevity be admitted as the prime excellence of a proverb [2]. This is, indeed, a neceſſary condition, without which it can neither retain the name nor the nature. For if the ſentiment be diffuſely expreſſed, if even when it contains a double image, it exceed ten or at moſt twelve

[2] "The brevity of this kind of compoſition, and the "condenſing of much thought into a ſmall compaſs, "renders it more ſententious, more ſage and expreſſive. "As in a ſmall ſeed, the whole power of vegetation, "which is to produce a tree, is contained. And if any "writer ſhould amplify the ſentence, it would be no "longer a proverb, but a declamation." Demetr. Phal. Περι Ερμηνειας. Sect. ix.

words,

words, it is no longer a proverb but an harangue. For the diſcriminating ſentiment muſt force itſelf on the mind by a ſingle effort, and not by a tedious proceſs; the language muſt be ſtrong and condenſed, rather omitting ſome circumſtances that appear neceſſary, than admitting any thing ſuperfluous. Horace himſelf inſiſts upon this as one of the expreſs rules of Didactic Poetry, and he has aſſigned the reaſon on which it is founded:

" Short be the precept, which with eaſe is gain'd
" By docile minds, and faithfully retain'd [3]."

Solomon expreſſes the ſame ſentiment in his own (that is the parabolic) manner:

" The words of the wiſe are like goads,
" And like nails that are firmly fixed [4]."

That

[3] Francis's Horace Art of Poetry, ver. 455.

[4] ECCLES. xii. 11. This I think is one of the *geminate* proverbs (or thoſe which "contain a double image," as mentioned before) and requires a *different* mode of interpretation for the two images, as having nothing coaleſcent in their natures.—It is the property of a proverb to *prick ſharply* and *hold firmly*. The firſt idea is included in the image of a goad—the latter in the nail *deeply*, and therefore, *firmly* driven. S. H.

That is, they inſtantaneouſly ſtimulate or affect the mind; they penetrate deeply, and are firmly retained.

Some degree of obſcurity is generally an attendant upon exceſſive brevity; and the parabolic ſtyle is ſo far from being abhorrent of this quality, that it ſeems frequently to affect it, and to regard it as a perfection. This obſcurity is not indeed altogether without its uſes: it whets the underſtanding, excites an appetite for knowledge, keeps alive the attention, and exerciſes the genius by the labour of the inveſtigation. The human mind, moreover, is ambitious of having a ſhare in the diſcovery of truth; exceſſive indolence or dulneſs only requires a very open and minute diſplay, or prefers a paſſive inert-

In Paleſtine, it formerly made an eſſential part of the building of a houſe, to furniſh the inſide of the ſeveral apartments with ſets of ſpikes, nails, or large pins, upon which to diſpoſe of, and hang up, the ſeveral moveables in common uſe, and proper to the apartment. Theſe ſpikes they worked into the walls at the firſt erection of them; the walls being of ſuch materials, that they could not bear their being driven in afterwards; and they were contrived ſo as to ſtrengthen the walls by binding the parts together, as well as to ſerve for conveniences. See Biſhop LOWTH's *Iſaiah*, p. 128. T.

neſs

neſs to the exerciſe and the praiſe of perſpicacity and diſcernment; and that knowledge is ever moſt delightful, which we have compaſſed by our own efforts [5]. Other cauſes, however, independent of the brevity and conciſeneſs of the language, have, in many caſes, contributed to the obſcurity of the parabolic ſtyle [6]. In the firſt place, ſome degree of obſcurity neceſſarily attends thoſe paſſages in

[5] So great a portion of human happineſs conſiſts in activity and employment, that without at all reſorting to the love of fame, we need not wonder that ſome degree of difficulty intereſts and engages the mind, and merely by exciting the faculties to action affords poſitive pleaſure. T.

——————" Pater ipſe colendi
" Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit, primuſque per artem
" Movit agros, *curis acuens mortalia corda:*
" Nec torpere gravi paſſus ſua regna veterno."

" Whetting with many a care the human heart."
S. H.

[6] The *brevity* of the ancient proverbs may, in a great meaſure, be accounted for, from the want of alphabetical writing, and their being intended to be committed to memory. Much of their *obſcurity* may be attributed to our ignorance of many local circumſtances to which they allude, and which actually ſerved to aſſiſt the memories of thoſe for whom they were deſigned. T.

which

which different objects are applied in ſucceſſion to the illuſtration of each other, without any expreſs marks of compariſon: of this we have had an example in the parable juſt now quoted, and of this there are many other examples in the ſacred writings. I will, nevertheleſs, ſelect one or two, which are deſerving of our attention for their peculiar propriety and elegance:

" Clouds and wind without rain,
" Is a man who glories in a fallacious gift [7]."

The following is in a different form:

" Gold, and abundance of rubies,
" And precious ornaments, are the lips of know-
" ledge [8]."

Again, obſcurity is almoſt inevitable, when the ſubject itſelf, to which the imagery appertains and alludes, is removed out of ſight, and the ſentiment aſſumes the form of allegory. Horace expreſſes a very common precept in plain language:

[7] Prov. xxv. 14. [8] Prov. xx. 15.

" Learn

" Learn the ſtrong ſenſe of pleaſure to controul;
" With virtuous pride its blandiſhments diſdain:
" Hurtful is pleaſure, when 'tis bought with
" pain[9]."

But with how much more elegance does Solomon deliver the ſame precept in a figurative manner, and under the veil of allegory!

" Haſt thou found honey? Eat no more than
" may ſuffice thee:
" Leſt thou be ſatiated, and nauſeate it[10]."

Some obſcurity alſo attends any compariſon which is of extenſive application: of this the following ſeems a pertinent example:

" As in water face (anſwers) to face,
" So doth the heart of man to man[11]."

This is certainly very difficult to apply or to define, ſince it may refer in many different views to the faculties, genius, affections, will, attachments, manners, virtues, and vices of men, among which there generally ſubſiſts a certain agreement or ſimilarity from imitation, and from habits which are inſen-

[9] Francis's Horace, B. I. Ep. ii. ver. 78.
[10] PROV. xxv. 16. [11] PROV. xxvii. 19.

ſibly

ſibly caught in ſocial intercourſe. Laſtly, not to dwell too long upon this ſubject, ſome obſcurity ſucceeds, when the principal, or perhaps the whole force of a proverb or parable, does not lie in the direct and literal ſenſe, but in ſomething not immediately expreſſed, which is however concomitant with it:

" The hearing ear, and the ſeeing eye,
" JEHOVAH made them both [12]."

To dwell upon the external and literal ſenſe of this proverb, will only bewilder the reader in the dubious turn of the expreſſion; but how ſublime, how profitable, is the ſentiment, when it comes from the pen of the Pſalmiſt, embelliſhed with his uſual perſpicuity and animation?

" He who planted the ear, ſhall he not hear?
" He who formed the eye, ſhall he not ſee [13]?"

The laſt quality that I ſhall mention as eſſential to a parable or proverb, is elegance; which is not inconſiſtent with brevity, or indeed with ſome degree of obſcurity. I ſpeak of elegance as it reſpects the ſentiment, the

[12] PROV. xx. 12. [13] PSAL. xciv. 9.

imagery,

imagery, and the diction, and of its union with all these we have already had sufficient proof in all the parables which have been quoted in the course of this Lecture. It may however be proper to remark in this place, that even those proverbs, which are the plainest, most obvious, and simple, which contain nothing remarkable either in sentiment or style, are not to be esteemed without their peculiar elegance, if they possess only brevity, and that neat, compact form, and roundness of period, which alone are sufficient to constitute a parable. Such is the maxim, quoted by David in the Sacred History, as an ancient proverb;

"Wickedness will proceed from the wicked[14]."

Such is that of Solomon,

"Hate stirreth up strifes;
"But love covereth all transgressions[15]."

And many others which might easily be produced from the same author.

There is another Didactic work of Solomon, entitled *Koheleth*, (Ecclesiastes) or the

[14] 1 SAM. xxiv. 13. [15] PROV. x. 12.

Preacher;

Preacher; or rather perhaps Wiſdom the Preacher, the general tenour and ſtyle of which is very different from the book of Proverbs, though there are many detached ſentiments and proverbs interſperſed. For the whole work is uniform, and confined to one ſubject, namely, the vanity of the world exemplified by the experience of Solomon, who is introduced in the character of a perſon inveſtigating a very difficult queſtion, examining the arguments on either ſide, and at length diſengaging himſelf from an anxious and doubtful diſputation. It would be very difficult to diſtinguiſh the parts and arrangement of this production; the order of the ſubject and the connexion of the arguments are involved in ſo much obſcurity, that ſcarcely any two commentators have agreed concerning the plan of the work, and the accurate diviſion of it into parts or ſections. The truth is, the laws of methodical compoſition and arrangement were neither known by the Hebrews, nor regarded in their Didactic writings. They uniformly retained the old ſententious manner, nor did they ſubmit to method, even where the occaſion appeared to demand it. The ſtyle of this

work

work is, however, ſingular; the language is generally low, I might almoſt call it mean or vulgar; it is frequently looſe, unconnected, approaching to the incorrectneſs of converſation; and poſſeſſes very little of the poetical character, even in the compoſition and ſtructure of the periods: which peculiarity may poſſibly be accounted for from the nature of the ſubject. Contrary to the opinion of the Rabbies, Eccleſiaſtes has been claſſed among the poetical books; though if their authority and opinions were of any weight or importance, they might, perhaps, on this occaſion, deſerve ſome attention [16].

Some of the Pſalms alſo belong properly to this claſs; the alphabetical, for inſtance, with ſome others. The alphabetical or acroſtic form of compoſition has been more than once alluded to in the courſe of theſe Lectures. The chief commendation of theſe

[16] It is the opinion of a very ingenious writer, in a learned work, which he has lately produced, that the greater part of this book was written in proſe, but that it contains many ſcraps of poetry, introduced as occaſion ſerved: and to this opinion I am inclined to aſſent. See A. V. DESVOEUX *Tent. Phil. & Crit. in Eccleſ.* lib. ii. cap. i. *Author's Note.*

poems is, that they are excellently accommodated to ordinary uſe; that the ſentiments are ſerious, devout, and practical; the language chaſte and perſpicuous; the compoſition neat, and regularly adapted to the ſententious form.

There are extant, beſides theſe, two other conſiderable works of the Didactic kind, which the Hebrew poetry may legally claim, though they are only extant in Greek proſe. I mean The Wiſdom of the Son of Sirach, and that which is entitled The Wiſdom of Solomon.

The work of the Son of Sirach, tranſlated from the Hebrew into Greek, by one of the deſcendants of the author, is altogether of the ſame kind with the Proverbs of Solomon; inſomuch, that it originally bore the ſame title (*Maſhalim*) as we learn from Jerome, who directly aſſerts, that he had ſeen the book in Hebrew [17]; and I ſee no reaſon why his aſſertion ſhould not relate to the original Hebrew copy, rather than to any Syriac verſion. However this may be, it is clear even from the Greek

[17] Præf. in Libros Salomonis.

tranſlation,

tranſlation, which we have, that the book in every reſpect reſembles the Proverbs of Solomon, as nearly as an imitation can reſemble an original. There is a great ſimilarity in the matter, the ſentiments, and the diction; the complexion of the ſtyle, and the conſtruction of the periods, are quite the ſame; ſo that I cannot entertain a doubt, that the author actually adopted the ſame mode of verſification, whatever it was, if we can admit that any knowledge of the Hebrew metres was extant at the time when he is ſuppoſed to have written. For all that we are able to conjecture on this head we are indebted to the great fidelity of the tranſlator, which is abundantly manifeſted in every part of the work. He ſeems indeed not at all to have affected the elegancies of the Greek language, but to have performed his duty with the moſt religious regard to the Hebrew idiom; he not only exhibits faithfully the ſentiments, but ſeems even to have numbered the words, and exactly to have preſerved their order; ſo that, were it literally and accurately to be re-tranſlated, I have very little doubt that, for the moſt part, the original diction would be recovered.

If any perſon will make the experiment on a ſmall ſcale, he will readily diſcern the perfect coincidence of this compoſition with the moſt ancient ſpecimens of the Didactic Poetry of the Hebrews; ſo exact indeed is the agreement both in form and character, that the reader might, without much difficulty, be perſuaded, that he was peruſing the compoſitions of another Solomon. This author is however an imitator chiefly of the former part of the book of Proverbs: for there is more connexion and order in the ſentiments; the ſtyle is alſo more highly coloured, and abounds more in imagery and figures than the Didactic Poetry of the Hebrews in general requires. As an inſtance, I need only mention that admirable perſonification of Wiſdom exhibited by him, in which he has ſo happily adopted the manner of his great predeceſſor [18].

The Wiſdom of Solomon is alſo compoſed in imitation of that prince of didactic writers, but with a degree of ſucceſs very unequal indeed to that of the Son of Sirach. It is not, like the book which bears his name,

[18] Ecclus. xxiv.

a trap-

a tranſlation from the Hebrew, but is evidently the performance of ſome Helleniſtic Jew, and originally written in Greek. The ſtyle is very unequal; it is often pompous and turgid, as well as tedious and diffuſe, and abounds in epithets, directly contrary to the practice of the Hebrews; it is however ſometimes temperate, poetical and ſublime. The conſtruction is occaſionally ſententious, and tolerably accurate in that reſpect, ſo as to diſcover very plainly that the author had the old Hebrew poetry for his model, though he fell far ſhort of its beauty and ſublimity. The economy of the work is ſtill more faulty; he continues the prayers of Solomon from the ninth chapter to the very end of the book; and they conſequently take up more than one-half of the whole. But beſide the tedioufneſs of ſuch an harangue, he indulges in too great a ſubtilty of diſquiſition upon abſtruſe ſubjects, and mingles many things very foreign to the nature of an addreſs to the Deity: and after all, the ſubject itſelf is brought to no perfect concluſion. On theſe accounts I agree with thoſe critics, who ſuppoſe this book to be a much more modern production than that of the

Son of Sirach, and to have been compoſed in a leſs enlightened age.

That I may not diſmiſs the ſubject without exhibiting a ſpecimen of ſome complete poem of the kind, ſuch as I have hitherto given, I ſhall add to this Lecture a tranſlation of a part of Eccleſiaſticus, namely, that elegant perſonification of Wiſdom I lately mentioned; in which I have endeavoured as much as poſſible to preſerve, or rather reſtore, the form and character of the original Hebrew [19].

THE

[19] Our author's obſervations on the nature and origin of Didactic Poetry are moſt ſtrikingly juſt: and on inſpecting the early Didactic productions of the Greeks, the old ſententious form may be eaſily diſcovered: indeed, that pointed and antithetic manner ſeems (probably by the force of habit and imitation) to have pervaded this kind of poetry, both ancient and modern. To our author's excellent remarks on the ſubject, I will add, that the ſcience of morals appears to be the only branch of diſcipline which can be ſucceſsfully treated of in verſe. The ſtudy of abſtract ſcience demands a diſpoſition of mind very different from that which enjoys the playfulneſs of fancy. In ſuch Didactic Poetry, therefore, as profeſſes to treat of any ſubject but morals, the mind is either too much warmed by the language, imagery, and epiſodes, to think of the main drift of the author, and then he is not underſtood, as

THE TWENTY-FOURTH CHAPTER OF ECCLESIASTICUS.

" Wiſdom ſhall praiſe her own ſpirit,
" And ſhall glory in the midſt of her people:
" In the congregation of the Moſt High ſhall ſhe
" open her mouth,
" And in the preſence of his power ſhall ſhe
" glory.
" I proceeded out of the mouth of the Moſt
" High;
" And as a miſt I covered the earth.
" I dwelt

as, I believe, is generally found to be the caſe in reading Dr. AKENSIDE's *Pleaſures of the Imagination*; or elſe the attention is fixed upon the matter, and then the poetical ſtyle is an unneceſſary and meretricious ornament, which only perplexes the mind, by diverting it from its object. The reaſon why ethics may be ſafely taught in verſe, ſeems to be, becauſe that ſcience is converſant chiefly with the human paſſions, and the delineation of them; and poetry being no other than the language of paſſion, will, on ſuch a ſubject, rather illuſtrate than confuſe. I may add too, that ethics is a ſcience with which mankind are moſt generally acquainted, and therefore can moſt eaſily comprehend. I am aware, that on this argument the ſucceſs and popularity of ſome Didactic Poems will be alledged againſt me, and particularly that of the Georgics, Lucretius, and Horace's Epiſtle to the Piſos; but I muſt

 remark,

" I dwelt above on high,
" And my throne was in the pillar of a cloud.
" I compaſſed the circuit of the heavens alone,
" And walked in the depth of the abyſs.
" In the waves of the ſea, and in all the earth,
" And in every people, and every nation I ob-
" tained a poſſeſſion:
" With all theſe I ſought reſt,
" And in whoſe inheritance ſhall I abide?
" Then the Creator of all things commanded me,
" And he that created me fixed my tabernacle:
" And ſaid, let thy dwelling be in Jacob,
" And in Iſrael thine inheritance.
" Before the world he created me, from the be-
" ginning;
" And I ſhall never ceaſe.
" In the tabernacle of holineſs I ſerved before
" him;
" And ſo was I eſtabliſhed in Sion.
" Thus in the beloved city he cauſed me to reſt,
" And over Jeruſalem was my power:

remark, that theſe very poems owe their whole ſucceſs to the epiſodes and the moral ſentiments with which they abound: and I appeal to any candid reader, whether, after all, he has not been at ſome times fatigued with the Didactic parts of even theſe moſt elegant productions. I do not indeed approve of long Didactic Poems, even upon moral ſubjects; for, unleſs they be enlivened by intereſting epiſodes and deſcriptions, they can ſcarcely fail to appear tedious and dry. T.

" I took

" I took root in an honourable people,
" In the portion of the inheritance of JEHOVAH.
" As a cedar in Lebanon was I exalted,
" And as a cypreſs on the mountains of Hermon.
" As a palm-tree in Gaddi was I exalted,
" And as plants of roſes in Jericho:
" As a fair olive in a pleaſant field,
" And as a plane-tree I was exalted above the
" waters;
" As cinnamon, and as a maſs of ointment I
" yielded fragrance;
" And as choice myrrh I breathed forth a plea-
" ſant odour,
" As galbanum, and onyx, and ſtorax,
" And as the vapour of frankincenſe in the taber-
" nacle.
" I, as the turpentine-tree, ſent out my branches,
" And my branches are the branches of glory
" and favour.
" I, as the vine, bloſſomed forth a pleaſant
" ſmell,
" And my flowers are the embryoes of honour
" and wealth.
" Come unto me all ye that deſire me,
" And with my productions be filled:
" For my remembrance is ſweeter than honey,
" And my poſſeſſion than the comb of the bees.
" They that eat me ſhall yet be hungry;
" And they that drink me ſhall yet be thirſty.

" He that obeyeth me ſhall not be aſhamed,
" And thoſe that act according to me ſhall not ſin.
" All theſe are in the book of the covenant of God
" moſt high;
" The law which Moſes commanded,
" An inheritance for the generation of Jacob
" Wiſdom filleth like Piſhon,
" And like Hiddekel in the month Abib.
" She maketh the underſtanding to overflow like
" Euphrates;
" And as Jordan in the days of harveſt.
" She ſendeth forth inſtruction as the river[20],
" And

[20] The grandſon of Sirach appears in this place to have fallen into an error, and to have failed of expreſſing the ſentiment of his anceſtor: for finding the word imperfectly written in his copy he read it כאר, and raſhly tranſlated it ὡς φως (as the light). Obſerve alſo the incongruity of this word with the context, according to the common reading: Piſon, Tigris, Euphrates, Jordan, *the light*, Gihon: in the place of *the light*, ſome river muſt certainly be intended, and therefore we ought to read כיאור, ὡς ὁ Πόλεμος, *as the river*, that is, the Nile, ſo called for the ſake of diſtinction: and doubtleſs to a Jew, who reſided in its neighbourhood, and who was a ſpectator of its wonderful inundations, it would appear worthy of being ranked with the moſt noble rivers, and conſequently worthy of this diſtinction. Moreover, JABLONSKIUS, *Pantheon Egypt*, lib. iv. cap. i. ſect. 2. is of opinion, that the word יאר chiefly refers to the Nile in the ſacred writers; and ſuppoſes יאר, in the Egyptian JARO,

" And as Gihon in the days of the vintage.
" The firſt man was not perfect in the knowledge
" of her,
" Neither ſhall the laſt ſearch her out:
" For her thoughts are more extenſive than the
" ſea,
" And her counſels than the vaſt abyſs.
" I came forth alſo as a brook from a river,
" And as a ſtream in Paradiſe welled from its
" fountain.
" I ſaid I will water my garden,
" And I will abundantly water my furrow;
" And behold, my brook became a river,
" And my river became a ſea.
" For I will beam forth inſtruction as the morn-
" ing,
" I will make it to ſhine afar off:

to have been the firſt and only name of the Nile among the Egyptians. This word, however, itſelf is defectively read כאר AMOS viii. 8. (" it is read כיאר in four MSS." K.) but being repeated immediately, it is more fully expreſſed כיאר, ix. 5. See CAPPELL *Crit. Sac.* iv. 2. 11. A learned friend of mine obſerved to me, that the great BOCHART had long ſince been of the ſame opinion, whoſe authority I am happy to adduce in favour of what I have here aſſerted: " אר is a *river*, as well as יאר. So it oc-
" curs AMOS viii. 8. where it is ſpoken of the Nile, and
" in the ſame ſenſe it is uſed by the ſon of Sirach, Ec-
" CLUS. xxiv. 27. where it has been haſtily tranſlated
" *the light.*" *Chanaan*, lib. i. chap. 23. *Author's Note.*

" For

" For I will pour out doctrine as prophecy,
" And bequeath it to all generations for ever.
" Behold I have not laboured for myself alone,
" But for all who inquire after the truth [21]."

[21] The following translation of this admirable chapter into English verse was furnished me by an ingenious friend, and I dare believe will prove acceptable to the reader. T.

ECCLESIASTICUS — CHAP. XXIV.

Wisdom shall raise her loud exulting voice,
And, 'midst her people, glory and rejoice;
Oft the Almighty's awful presence near,
Her dulcet sounds angelic choirs shall hear.—
Wak'd by the breath of heaven's high king to birth,
I seem'd a cloud involving skies and earth;
Aloft on places high, was my retreat,
Dark mists encircled my exalted seat;
Round the broad sky I solitary roved,
Or through the mazy depths of ocean moved,
My paths amidst the swelling waves remain'd,
Some power in every changing clime I gain'd;
With each, with all, I anxious sought repose;
But where, say where, shall Wisdom's wanderings close?
Hark! did not he, who fram'd the worlds, command?
Here shall thy much-lov'd tabernacle stand,
Here on the plains of Jacob shalt thou live,
Thy goodly heritage shall Israel give.—
Me, before time itself he gave to-day,
Nor shall my spirit faint, or feel decay;
I bow'd before him in his hallow'd shrine,
And Sion's pride and Sion's strength was mine.
Did I not tall as those fair cedars grow,
Which grace our Lebanon's exalted brow?

Did

Did I not lofty as the cypreſs riſe,
Which ſeems from Hermon's heights to meet the ſkies?
Freſh as Engaddi's palm that ſcents the air,
Like roſe of Jericho, ſo ſweet, ſo fair;
Green as the verdant olive of the groves,
Straight as the plane-tree which the ſtreamlet loves.
Around ſoft cinnamon its odour ſpreads,
Aſpalathus perfumes our balmy meads;
More grateful ſtill does myrrh its fragrance yield,
Sweet to the ſenſe, the glory of the field;—
In Salem's temple, at JEHOVAH's ſhrine,
From frankincenſe aſcends a fume divine;
Yet did my breath more precious balms exhale,
And charge with fragrance each auſpicious gale.
I the rich produce of the ſeaſons bring,
And grace and honour 'midſt my foliage ſpring;
Richer than vineyards riſe my ſacred bow'rs,
Sweeter than roſes bloom my vernal flowers;
Fair love is mine, and hope, and gentle fear;
Me Science hallows, as a parent dear.

Come, who aſpire beneath my ſhade to live;
Come, all my fragrance, all my fruits receive!
Sweeter than honey are the ſtrains I ſing,
Sweeter than honey-comb the dower I bring:
Me, taſte who will, ſhall feel increas'd deſire,
Who drinks ſhall ſtill my flowing cups require;
He whoſe firm heart my precepts ſtill obeys,
With ſafety walks thro' life's perplexing maze;
Who cautious follows where my footſteps lead,
No cares ſhall feel, no nightly terrors dread.

Heaven's book records my ever ſacred lore,
Deriv'd from HIM, whom earth and ſeas adore;

His wiſdom guides this varying ſcene below,
(Clear as in ſpring the ſtreams of Tigris flow)
His ſpirit fills with hope th' expanding ſoul,
Full as the waters of Euphrates roll,
Or as, when harveſt ſwells the golden grain,
Impetuous Jordan ruſhes o'er the plain.—
From him the ray of holy ſcience ſhows,
Bright as the ſun maturing Geon's vines;—
Man breath'd at firſt unconſcious of the power,
Nor knows heaven's wiſdom at his lateſt hour.

Small was my ſtream, when firſt I roll'd along,
In clear meanders Eden's vales among;
With freſhening draughts each tender plant I fed,
And bade each flow'ret raiſe its bluſhing head;
But ſoon my torrent o'er its margin roſe,
Where late a brook, behold an ocean flows!
For Wiſdom's bleſſings ſhall o'er earth extend,
Bleſſings that know no bound, that know no end—
Each ſelfiſh labour Wiſdom ſhall diſdain,
My fruit, my treaſures, all who ſeek ſhall gain.

LEC-

LECTURE XXV.

OF THE HEBREW ODE IN GENERAL; AND FIRST OF THAT CLASS, THE CHARACTERISTICS OF WHICH ARE SWEETNESS AND ELEGANCE.

Lyric Poetry originated from the moſt jocund and pleaſing affections of the human mind.—The moſt ancient ſpecies of poetry, and almoſt coeval with human nature itſelf.—Particularly cultivated by the Hebrews.—The manner, introduced by David, of ſinging their odes highly magnificent.—The general character of this ſpecies of poetry: its principal diſtinctions.—The firſt character of the Ode, ſweetneſs.—What paſſions and affections it is intended to expreſs: examples from the Pſalms.—The cxxxiiid *Pſalm in Engliſh verſe.*

THOSE compoſitions which were intended for muſic, whether vocal alone, or accompanied with inſtruments, obtained among the Hebrews the appellation of *Shir*, among the Greeks that of *Odé*; and both theſe words have exactly the ſame power and ſignification. The Hebrew word, as well as the Greek, appears in courſe of time to have been

been appropriated to denote a particular form and ſpecies of poetry, with this difference however, that it is occaſionally uſed with greater latitude.

The ode is in its nature ſufficiently expreſſive of its origin. It was the offſpring of the moſt vivid, and the moſt agreeable paſſions of the mind, of love, joy, and admiration. If we conſider man on his firſt creation, ſuch as the Sacred Writings repreſent him; in perfect poſſeſſion of reaſon and ſpeech; neither ignorant of his own nor of the divine nature, but fully conſcious of the goodneſs, majeſty, and power of God; not an unobſervant ſpectator of the beautiful fabric of the univerſe; is it not probable, that on the contemplation of theſe objects, his heart would glow with gratitude and love? And is it not probable, that the effect of ſuch an emotion would be an effuſion of praiſe to his Great Creator, accompanied with a ſuitable energy and exaltation of voice? Such indeed were the ſenſations experienced by the author of that moſt beautiful Pſalm, in which the whole creation is invited to celebrate the glory of the moſt high God:

"Praiſe

" Praiſe JEHOVAH from the heavens;
" Praiſe him in the heights:
" Praiſe him all his angels;
" Praiſe him all his hoſts [1]."

This hymn is, therefore, moſt elegantly imitated, and put into the mouth of Adam by our countryman Milton [2], who is juſtly accounted the next in ſublimity to thoſe poets, who wrote under the influence of divine inſpiration. Indeed we ſcarcely ſeem to conceive rightly of that original and perfect ſtate of man, unleſs we aſſign him ſome of the aids of harmony and poetical expreſſion, to enable him to teſtify in terms becoming the dignity of the ſubject, his devout affections towards his infinite Creator.

Without carrying our reſearches, however, to objects ſo remote from human information, if we appeal only to the common teſtimony of hiſtory, we ſhall find that, among every people not utterly barbarous, the uſe of muſic and poetry in the celebration of their religious myſteries, has prevailed from the firſt periods of ſociety. Of all that ſacred melody, which Plato informs us was ſometimes eſtabliſhed by the ſolemn

[1] Ps. cxlviii. [2] *Parad. Loſt*, lib. v.

ſanction

ſanction of legal authority [3], he aſſigns the firſt rank to that which aſſumed the form of addreſſes to the Deity, and was diſtinguiſhed by the appellation of Hymns. In all the Latin poetry, there is nothing that can boaſt equal antiquity with the Salian poems of Numa, compoſed by that wiſe and learned monarch on the firſt inſtitution of his religious rites, and ſung by the Salii, whom Dionyſius ſtyles "the chorus of the Gods of "War [4]," with ſolemn dancing and other religious ceremonies. There is ſcarcely any neceſſity to mention, that the moſt ancient of all poems extant (thoſe I mean of which the date is aſcertained, and which deſerve the name of poems) is the thankſgiving Ode of Moſes on paſſing the Red Sea, the moſt perfect in its kind, and the true and genuine effuſion of the joyful affections. Thus the origin of the ode may be traced into that of poetry itſelf, and appears to be coeval with the commencement of religion, or more properly the creation of man [5].

The

[3] *De Legibus*, iii. [4] *Antiq. Rom.* ii. 70.

[5] This concluſion appears to me neither conſonant to reaſon nor to fact. The firſt uſe of poetry was probably to

The Hebrews cultivated this kind of poetry above every other, and therefore may well be ſuppoſed to have been peculiarly ex-

to preſerve the remembrance of events, and not the expreſſions of paſſion; accordingly, the remains of the firſt poetic compoſitions appear to have been of the former kind. One inſtance was given in a preceding Lecture relative to the hiſtory of Lamech, and another may here be added concerning that of Nimrod—"He was a mighty "hunter (rather warrior) before the Lord:" wherefore it is ſaid:——

"As Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord."

Agreeable to this idea is an obſervation reſpecting the Arabians, of the late ingenious but ill-treated Dr Brown: "The *oldeſt compoſitions* are in *rythm* or *rude verſe*, and "are often cited as *proofs* of their *ſubſequent hiſtory*." It is not only evident that Moſes applied them in this way, but alſo that they were long prior to any example of the exiſtence of an ode; which, however, ſeems to have been in fact, as well as in nature, the next ſpecies of poetic compoſition. S. H.

The rude poetry of barbarous nations (as far as we can judge from the accounts of thoſe who have viſited the South-Sea iſlands and the Indian nations) relates in general to *love* and *war*; it is employed in cheriſhing, or in exciting the paſſions. Notwithſtanding, therefore, the ingenuity of the above remark (which on that account I would not omit) I am inclined to think there is more foundation for our author's theory than Mr. H. ſuppoſes. See *Eſſay Hiſt. and Mor.* Eſſ. i. p. 31. T.

cellent in it. It was uſual in every period of that nation to celebrate in ſongs of joy their gratitude to God, their Saviour, for every fortunate event, and particularly for ſucceſs in war. Hence the triumphal odes of Moſes, of Deborah, of David. The ſchools of the prophets were alſo, in all probability, coeval with the republic; and were certainly antecedent to the monarchy by many years: there, as we have already ſeen, the youth, educated in the prophetic diſcipline, applied themſelves, among other ſtudies, particularly to ſacred poetry, and celebrated the praiſes of Almighty God in Lyric compoſitions, accompanied with muſic. Under the government of David, however, the arts of muſic and poetry were in their moſt flouriſhing ſtate. By him no leſs than four thouſand ſingers or muſicians were appointed from among the Levites[6], under two hundred and eighty-eight principal ſingers, or leaders of the band, and diſtributed into twenty-four companies, who officiated weekly by rotation in the temple, and whoſe whole buſineſs was to perform the ſacred

[6] 1 CHRON. xxiii. 5.

hymns,

hymns; the one part chanting or ſinging, and the other playing upon different inſtruments [7]. The chief of theſe were Aſaph, Heman, and Iduthun, who alſo, as we may preſume from the titles of the Pſalms, were compoſers of hymns [8]. From ſo very ſplendid an eſtabliſhment, ſo far ſurpaſſing every other appointment of the kind, ſome reaſonable conjectures may be formed concerning the original dignity and grandeur of the Hebrew Ode. We muſt remember too, that we at preſent poſſeſs only ſome ruins as it were of that magnificent fabric, deprived of every ornament, except that ſplendour and elegance, which, notwithſtanding the obſcurity that antiquity has caſt over them, ſtill ſhine forth in the ſentiments and language. Hence, in treating of the Hebrew ode, we muſt be content to omit entirely what relates to the ſacred muſic, and the nature of the inſtruments which accompanied the vocal performance; though there is the utmoſt probability, that theſe circumſtances were not without their influence, as

[7] 1 CHRON. XXV. 1—7.

[8] See alſo 2 CHRON. XXIX. 30.

far as reſpects the form and conſtruction of the different ſpecies of ode. Our information upon theſe ſubjects is, indeed, ſo very ſcanty, that I eſteem it ſafer to be ſilent altogether concerning them, than to imitate the example of ſome of the learned, who after ſaying much, have, in fact, ſaid nothing. I ſhall therefore proceed to a brief inquiry into the general nature and properties of this ſpecies of poetry; and after that, we ſhall be better qualified to judge of thoſe ſpecimens which have been tranſmitted to us by the Hebrew writers.

Of all the different forms of poetical compoſition, there is none more agreeable, harmonious, elegant, diverſified and ſublime than the ode; and theſe qualities are diſplayed in the order, ſentiments, imagery, diction, and verſification. The principal beauty of an ode conſiſts in the order and arrangement of the ſubject; but this excellence, while it is eaſily felt, is difficult to be deſcribed, for there is this peculiarity attending it, that the form of the ode is by no means confined to any certain rule for the exact and accurate diſtribution of the parts. It is lively and unconſtrained: when the

ſubject,

ſubject is ſublime, it is impetuous, bold, and ſometimes might almoſt deſerve the epithet licentious as to ſymmetry and method: but even in this caſe, and uniformly in every other, a certain facility and eaſe muſt pervade the whole, which may afford at leaſt the appearance of unaffected elegance, and ſeem to prefer nature to art. This appearance is beſt preſerved by an exordium plain, ſimple, and expreſſive; by a diſplay and detail of incidents and ſentiments riſing delicately and artfully from each other, yet without any appearance of art; and by a concluſion not pointed or epigrammatic, but finiſhing by a gentle turn of the ſentiment in a part where it is leaſt expected, and ſometimes as it were by chance [9]. Thus it is not the metre or verſification which conſtitutes this ſpecies of compoſition; for unleſs all theſe circumſtances be adverted to, it is plain that whatever be the merit of the production, it cannot with any propriety be termed

[9] I do not know any Lyric poems, to which this commendation is more applicable than the Arabic: I do not ſpeak of all, but the beſt of them. I have ſcarcely ever obſerved happier concluſions to any poems, than to ſome of the Arabic odes. M.

an ode. Many of the odes of Horace are entirely in this form, as well as almoſt all of thoſe few which our countryman Hannes has left behind him. There are two Lyric Poems in the Sylvæ of Papinius Statius [10], of which the verſification is full, ſonorous, and flowing; the ſentiments elegant; the diction, if not highly poliſhed, yet ardent and glowing; on the whole, however, the form, the grace, the expreſs manner of the ode is wanting.

The ſentiments and imagery muſt be ſuitable to the nature of the ſubject and the compoſition, which is varied and unconfined by ſtrict rule or method. On familiar ſubjects they will be ſprightly, florid, and agreeable; on ſublime topics, ſolemn, bold, and vivid; on every ſubject, highly elegant, expreſſive, and diverſified. Imagery from natural objects is peculiarly adapted to the ode; hiſtorical common-places may alſo be admitted, as well as deſcriptions lively but ſhort, and (when it riſes to any uncommon ſtrain of ſublimity) frequent perſonifications. The diction muſt be choice

[10] Lib. iv. Sylv. 5, & 7.

and elegant, it muſt be alſo luminous, clear, and animated; it muſt poſſeſs ſome elegancies peculiar to itſelf, and be as diſtinct from the common language of poetry, as the form and faſhion of the production is from the general caſt of poetical compoſition. In this that happineſs of expreſſion, for which Horace is ſo juſtly celebrated, wholly conſiſts. A ſweetneſs and variety in the verſification is indiſpenſible, according to the nature of the language, or as the infinite diverſity of ſubjects may require.

'It is much to be lamented, that in treating of the Hebrew ode, we muſt of neceſſity be ſilent concerning the numbers or verſification, which (though we are almoſt totally ignorant of its nature and principles) we have the utmoſt reaſon to ſuppoſe was accommodated to the muſic, and agreeable to the genius of the language[11]. In every other reſpect, as the force and elegance of

[11] This may be preſumed from a variety of circumſtances, particularly ſuch as might be pointed out in the cxxxvth Pſalm, where *Jah* is ſometimes uſed and ſometimes *Jehovah*, where either might, for any other than a metrical conſideration, have been indiſcriminately uſed. S. H.

the language, the beauty and dignity of the ſentiments and imagery, the different graces and excellencies of order and arrangement, I ſhall not heſitate to prefer the Hebrew writers to the Lyric poets of every other nation. But leſt we ſhould dubiouſly wander in ſo extenſive a field, it will be proper to preſcribe ſome kind of limit to our courſe, which may be conveniently done, by diſtributing all the diverſities of this ſpecies of compoſition into three general claſſes. Of the firſt claſs the general characteriſtic will be ſweetneſs, of the laſt ſublimity; and between theſe we may introduce one of a middle nature, as partaking of the properties of both[*]. The qualities which may be accounted

[*] It will not be unſeaſonable in this place, perhaps, to offer a few remarks on the peculiar character of the Lyric Poetry of David. For ſome commentators by too indiſcriminately praiſing it, have paid no regard to its peculiar characteriſtics; and thus from an intemperate zeal, the poet has even loſt a part of that commendation which was juſtly due to him.

For my part, judging rather by my taſte and feelings, than by any rules of art, I think David ſeems to excel in this firſt ſpecies of ode, the characteriſtic of which is ſweetneſs. He is unequalled when he deſcribes ſ[illegible] ob-

jects

counted common to all the three claſſes, are variety and elegance.

Although

jects of nature, the fields, the woods, the fountains; and of his other odes thoſe are moſt excellent, which he compoſed in his exiles: nor is this any thing extraordinary; he had then more leiſure for the cultivation of poetry, he experienced more vivid ſenſations than at other times, and he treated of thoſe objects which, being immediately before his eyes, brought back to his mind the recollection of his youth, and inſpired his imagination with fresh vigour. It is however remarkable, that thoſe which he compoſed in his old age, when he fled from Abſalom, not only equal the fruits of his early years, but even ſurpaſs them in fire and ſpirit: if, as I am fully perſuaded, the xxiiid and xliid Pſalms were produced during that exile.

On the other hand, thoſe Pſalms intereſt me leſs, in which the more violent affections prevail, whether of ſorrow or indignation, not even excepting ſuch as imprecate curſes on his enemies. There is in theſe much of the terrific; but in reading them, the heart is not affected, the paſſions are not vehemently excited. Theſe odes do not poſſeſs that general ſolemnity and awful ſublimity which characterize the book of Job, a compoſition of a different claſs, but poſſeſſing exquiſite force in moving the paſſions. Neither are loftineſs of diction, or boldneſs in deſcribing objects of terror, to be accounted amongſt the excellencies of David; for in theſe reſpects he not only yields, in my opinion, to Job, but alſo to Moſes. I do not except the xviiith Pſalm, in the firſt verſes of which I obſerve more of art and deſign, than of real

Although the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews is always occupied upon ſerious ſubjects, nor ever deſcends to that levity which is admitted into that of other nations, the character of ſweetneſs is by no means inconſiſtent with it. The ſweetneſs of the Hebrew ode conſiſts in the gentle and tender paſſions which it excites; in the gay and florid imagery, and in the chaſte and unoſtentatious diction which it employs. The paſſions which it generally affects are thoſe of love, tenderneſs, hope, cheerfulneſs, and penſive ſorrow. In the ſixty-third Pſalm the royal Prophet, ſuppoſed to be then an exile in the wilderneſs, expreſſes moſt elegantly the ſentiments of tenderneſs and love. The voice of grief and complaint is tempered with the conſolations of hope in the eightieth Pſalm: and the ninety-ſecond conſiſts wholly of joy, which is not the leſs ſincere, becauſe it is not exceſſive. The ſweetneſs of all

real horror and ſublimity: in what follows, the warmth of the compoſition ſubſides, and it becomes more temperate than might be expected from ſuch an exordium. The Moſaic Pſalms I confeſs pleaſe me more in this reſpect, and therefore I prefer the xxixth to that in queſtion. M.

theſe

theſe in compoſition, ſentiment, diction, and arrangement, has never been equalled by the fineſt productions of all the Heathen Muſes and Graces united. Though none of the above are deficient in imagery, I muſt confeſs I have never met with any image ſo truly pleaſing and delightful as the following deſcription of the Deity in the character of a ſhepherd:

" The Lord is my ſhepherd, I ſhall not want:
" In tender graſs he giveth me to lie down;
" He guideth me to ſtreams that gently flow [13]."

How

[13] Ps. xxiii. 1. This Pſalm is deſerving of all the commendation which our author has beſtowed upon it. If I am not miſtaken, it was compoſed by David when he was expelled from the holy city and temple: for in the 6th verſe he hopes for a return to the houſe of God. Since of all the divine mercies he particularly commemorates this, that in time of neceſſity he wants for nothing, and is even received to a banquet in the ſight of his enemies, I conceive it to relate to that time, when flying from the conteſt with his diſobedient ſon, he pitched his camp beyond Jordan, and was in danger of ſeeing his little army periſh for want of proviſion in that uncultivated region, or of being deſerted by all his friends. Affairs, however, turned out quite different: for what he could not foreſee or hope, the Almighty performed for him. The veteran ſoldiers flowed in to him from every

How graceful and animated is that rich and flouriſhing picture of nature, which is exhibited

every quarter, and his whole camp was ſo liberally ſupported by the good and opulent citizens, that in this very ſituation he was enabled to collect an army and riſk the event of a battle. See 2 SAM. xvii. 26—29.

He therefore compares himſelf to a ſheep, and the Almighty to a ſhepherd: a very obvious figure, and which every day occurred to his ſight during his ſtay in thoſe deſert parts. The ſheep, timid, defenceleſs, expoſed to all the beaſts of prey, and poſſeſſed of little knowledge or power of foreſeeing or avoiding dangers, are indebted for life, ſafety, and every thing to the care of the ſhepherd. We muſt remember alſo, that the exiled king had formerly himſelf been a ſhepherd. The recollection therefore of his paſt life breaks in upon his mind. "JEHOVAH," ſays he, "is my ſhepherd, I ſhall want "nothing." It is his province to provide for my exiſtence, and to procure for me thoſe bleſſings which I am unable to obtain for myſelf. The *tender herb* (*daſha*, which is properly the *virgin* herb, or that which has not budded into ſeed or bloſſom) is more grateful to ſheep than that which is ſeeded (*gneſeb*) GEN. i. 10, 11. In meadows, therefore, covered with the green and tender graſs, he ſuppoſes JEHOVAH to cauſe him to reſt under his care. He was expelled to Lebanon, from the tops of which cataracts of melted ſnow are conſtantly falling: theſe are dangerous for ſheep to approach, nor is the water ſufficiently wholeſome. He therefore adds, that he is led to waters gently flowing, where the clear ſtream meanders through the fertile plain. The ſcene which

was

exhibited in the ſixty-fifth Pſalm. When the Prophet, with a fertility of expreſſion cor-

was before his eyes conſiſted of rude hills and vallies, deep, gloomy, dark, and horrid, the haunts only of the fierceſt animals. I would here remark, that the word צלמות, which according to the Maſoretic punctuation is read *Tzilmavet*, and tranſlated the *ſhadows of death*, would be better read *Tzilamot*, and tranſlated ſimply ſhades, or *the valley of the ſhades*, and I am led to this concluſion by comparing it with the Arabic. There is no ſafety for the ſheep in theſe vallies but in the care of the ſhepherd. You are then preſented with a great variety of contraſted imagery in this Pſalm; on the one hand, the open paſtures, and the flowing rivulets, the recollection of which never fails to delight; and on the other hand, the cheerleſs and gloomy vallies, which inſpire the reader with freſh horror. Deſcending from figurative to plain language, he next celebrates the bounty of God in preparing him a banquet in the face of his enemies; and therefore regales himſelf with the delicious hope, that he ſhall once more be reſtored to his ſacred temple. M.

Mr. TATE (in our common verſion of the Pſalms) has been remarkably fortunate in his paraphraſe of the firſt verſes of this Pſalm; ſo much indeed, that for ſimplicity, and a cloſe adherence to the ſpirit of the original, I cannot help preferring it to the celebrated tranſlation of Mr. Addiſon:

" The Lord himſelf, the mighty Lord,
" Vouchſafes to be my guide;
" The ſhepherd, by whoſe conſtant care
" My wants are all ſupplied.

" In

correſpondent to the ſubject, praiſes the beneficence of the Deity in watering the earth and making it fruitful. On a ſublime ſubject alſo, but ſtill one of the gay and agreeable kind, I mean the inauguration of Solomon, which is celebrated in the ſeventy-ſecond Pſalm, there is ſuch variety and beauty of imagery, ſuch a ſplendour of diction, ſuch elegance in the compoſition, that I believe it will be impoſſible in the whole compaſs of literature, ſacred or profane, to find ſuch an union of ſublimity with ſweetneſs and grace.

Theſe few ſelect examples of the elegant and beautiful in Lyric compoſition, I have pointed out for your more attentive conſideration; and I am of opinion, that in all the treaſures of the Muſes you will ſeek in

" In tender graſs he makes me feed,
" And gently there repoſe;
" And leads me to cool ſhades, and where
" Refreſhing water flows."

The fifteenth Pſalm is alſo admirably tranſlated by the ſame hand: the laſt verſe in particular is beautiful and ſublime: though the claſſical reader will ſee that the tranſlator had his eye on the " Si fractus illabatur orbis" of Horace. T.

vain,

vain for models more perfect. I will add one other ſpecimen, which, if I am not miſtaken, is expreſſive of the true Lyric form and character; and compreſſes in a ſmall compaſs all the merits and elegance incidental to that ſpecies of compoſition. It is, if I may be allowed to uſe the expreſſion of a very polite writer,

A drop from Helicon, a flower
Cull'd from the Muſe's favourite bower [14].

The Pſalmiſt contemplating the harmony which pervaded the ſolemn aſſembly of the people, at the celebration of one of their feſtivals, expreſſes himſelf nearly as follows:

PSALM CXXXIII. [15]

"How bleſt the ſight, the joy how ſweet,
"When brothers join'd with brothers meet
"In bands of mutual love!
"Leſs ſweet the liquid fragrance, ſhed
"On Aaron's conſecrated head,
"Ran trickling from above:

"And

[14] CALLIMACH. Hymn. in Apoll. v. 112.

[15] This Pſalm is one of the fifteen, which are entitled, *Odes of the Aſcenſions*: that is, which were ſung when the people *came* up either to worſhip in Jeruſalem at the annual feſtivals, or perhaps from the Babyloniſh captivity. The *return* is certainly called "the *aſcenſion* or *coming up* "from Babylon," EZR. vii. 9. And the old SYRIAC tranſlator,

" And reach'd his beard, and reach'd his veſt.
" Leſs ſweet the dews on Hermon's breaſt,

" Or

tranſlator, who explains the ſubjects of the Pſalms by ap-poſite titles, refers to this circumſtance almoſt all the Pſalms that bear this inſcription; ſome of them indeed without ſufficient foundation; but many of them manifeſtly have relation to it. Theodoret indiſcriminately explains them all as relating to the Babyloniſh captivity; and thus illuſtrates the title: " Odes of the Aſcenſions; " Theodotion, Songs of the Aſcenſions: But Symma-" chus and Aculas, on the returns. It is evident that " the coming up, and the aſcent relate to the return of " the people from the Babyloniſh captivity." THEOD. in Pſ. cxx. But we muſt not omit remarking alſo, that both in the Old and New Teſtament there is ſcarcely a phraſe more common than " to go up to Jeruſalem, to go " up to the feaſt," &c. (See JOHN vii. 8.) And obſerve above the reſt, Pſ. cxxii. which can ſcarcely be applied to any thing but the celebration of ſome feſtival. What the Jews ſay about the ſteps *aſcending* to the Temple is unworthy the attention of any perſon of common ſenſe. In the laſt period of this Pſalm, the particle שם (*ſhom*) is neceſſarily to be referred to the word ציון (*tzion*); and there is nothing elſe to which it can be referred. Beſides, to what, except to *Sion*, can the promiſes *Berachah* and *Chajom* relate? (See particularly Pſ. cxxxii. 13, and 15.) Theſe words are indeed ambiguous, ſo that they may refer either to temporal or eternal happineſs, or to both alike. (Compare DEUT. xxviii. 2, &c. with Pſ. xxiv. 5. and PROV. xxvii. 27. with DAN. xii. 2.) And

in

" Or Sion's hill deſcend:
" That hill has God with bleſſings crown'd,
" There promis'd grace that knows no bound,
" And life that knows no end [16]."

in this place, according to the nature of the myſtical allegory, they may be interpreted in either ſenſe. If theſe remarks be true, the critics have taken a great deal of pains about nothing. There is no occaſion for emendation. If the ellipſis be only ſupplied by the word *ee-tal* (as the dew) or ſimply by the particle *ve* or *ee* (*and* or *as*) before the word *deſcending* (or which deſcends) the conſtruction will be complete. In the ſame manner Hezekiah ſays in ISAIAH:

" As a ſwallow, (and as) a crane, ſo I chattered."
chap. xxxviii. 14.
Author's Note.

[16] On a former occaſion I thought it neceſſary to trouble the reader with an imitation of Buchanan's verſion of this beautiful Pſalm. I have ſince endeavoured to complete it. If the meaſure ſhould ſeem in the eyes of ſome to bear too near a reſemblance to that of their old acquaintance Sternhold, I have only to urge, that its ſimplicity ſeems to be more ſuitable to the ſubject, than that which Mr. Merrick has adopted. Notwithſtanding our author's ingenious defence of his own (which is alſo Mr. Merrick's) interpretation of the laſt verſe, I am well convinced that Buchanan's verſion is right, and that the particle *ſhem* in the laſt verſe relates to the perſons, and not to the place: indeed, not only a great part of the general utility, but even the beauty of this Ode is loſt, by interpreting it otherwiſe. The following I ſubmit with all

humility to the judgment of the reader, merely that I may not leave the former ſtanzas imperfect:

PSALM CXXXIII.

Sweet is the love, that mutual glows
  Within each brother's breaſt;
And binds in gentleſt bonds each heart,
  All bleſſing, and all bleſt:
Sweet as the odorous balſam pour'd
  On Aaron's ſacred head,
Which o'er his beard, and down his veſt,
  A breathing fragrance ſhed.
Like morning dews on Sion's mount
  That ſpread their ſilver rays;
And deck with gems the verdant pomp,
  Which Hermon's top diſplays.
To ſuch the Lord of life and love
  His bleſſing ſhall extend:
On earth a life of joy and peace,
  And life that ne'er ſhall end. T.

LECTURE XXVI.

THE INTERMEDIATE OR MIXED STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

The Lyric Poetry of the intermediate or mixed ſtyle conſiſts of an union of ſweetneſs and ſublimity.—The xciſt *and* lxxxiſt *Pſalms explained and critically illuſtrated.—Of the digreſſions of the Hebrew poets, alſo of Pindar; not upon the ſame principle.—A criticiſm upon the* lxxviiith *Pſalm.—The* xixth *Pſalm in Engliſh verſe.*

HAVING diſmiſſed the ſubject of the more beautiful ſpecies of ode, in order to proceed by proper ſtages to what I deem the ſummit of excellence and ſublimity in the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews, it will be neceſſary to reſt a while, and to beſtow ſome little attention upon that middle ſtyle of compoſition, to which I adverted as conſtituting one of the grand diviſions of this order of poems. This again may be conſidered as admitting of a ſubdiviſion, as including both thoſe Lyric compoſitions, in which ſweetneſs and ſublimity are ſo uniformly blended, that every part of the poem may be ſaid to partake equally of both; and

thoſe, in which theſe qualities ſeparately occur in ſuch a manner, that the complexion of the poem is altogether changeable and diverſified. Of each ſpecies I ſhall endeavour to produce an example or two.

The ſubject of the ninety-firſt Pſalm is the ſecurity, the ſucceſs, and the rewards of piety. The exordium exhibits the pious man placing all his dependance upon Almighty God:

" He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the Moſt
" High;
" Who lodgeth under the ſhadow of the Omni-
" potent;
" Who ſaith to JEHOVAH, thou art my hope and
" my fortreſs!
" My God, in whom I truſt[1]:——

And

[1] This beautiful exordium has been moſt egregiouſly miſtaken by the Maſorites, and by many commentators and tranſlators: whoſe errors will be moſt effectually demonſtrated, by removing the difficulties of which they complain. Thus the אמר is in *Benoni* as well as ישב; the future יתלונן alſo has the force of a participle, by the ellipſis of אשר; of which, to go no further, we have three examples in this very Pſalm, ver. 5 and 6: thus alſo Symmachus, who has tranſlated the firſt verſe in this manner:

" He dwelling under the canopy of the Moſt High,
" Lodging under the ſhadow of the Mighty One."

Whence

And immediately leaving the ſentence unfiniſhed, he apoſtrophizes to the ſame perſon, whom he had been deſcribing:

" He indeed ſhall deliver thee
" From the ſnare of the fowler, from the deſtroy-
" ing peſtilence."

The

Whence it is plain, that he did not take the verb אמר as if it were the firſt perſon of the future, as the Maſorites have done; whence principally the error has originated: nor indeed has he compacted into one nugatory propoſition the two members of the firſt verſe, which are parallel and ſynonymous. Then in ver. 3. an apoſtrophe very eaſy and diſtinct is made to the perſon to whom the preceding expreſſions relate: where it is alſo to be remarked, that the particle כי is not cauſal but affirmative, *indeed* or *in fact*, as in Ps. lxxvii. 12. 1 Sam. xiv. 39, and 44. and in many other parts of Scripture. But to demonſtrate more clearly this matter by example, the whole form and nature of this exordium is perfectly the ſame with that of Ps. cxxviii. which has never been conſidered as involving any obſcurity.

" Bleſſed is every man who feareth Jehovah,
" And who walketh in his paths:
" Thou, indeed, ſhalt eat the labour of thy hands:
" O happy art thou, and well ſhall it be with thee."

But if, after all, any reader ſhould not be ſatisfied with the apoſtrophe formed from the abrupt ſentence, he may take the verb אמר for the third perſon preterite, as the

The imagery that follows is beautiful and diverſified, and at the ſame time uncommonly ſolemn and ſublime:

" With his feathers will he cover thee,
" And under his wings ſhalt thou find protec-
" tion:
" His truth ſhall be thy ſhield and thy defence.
" Thou ſhalt not fear from the terror by night;
" From the arrow that flieth by day;
" From the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs[2];
" From the deſtruction that waſteth at noon.
" A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide;
" And ten thouſand at thy right-hand:
" To thee it ſhall not approach."

How excellent alſo are the ſucceeding images, the guard of angels, the treading under foot the fierceſt and moſt formidable animals:

SYR. does. Thus the firſt verſe will be the ſubject, and the ſecond the predicate of the propoſition. To this explication I am not averſe, and it is certainly much better than that which is now generally received. But even in this manner, from the condenſing of two verſes into one ſentence, there will ariſe a languour in the ſentiment, and they will form almoſt one and the ſame propoſition.

Author's Note.

[2] See a note on the Hiſtory of the Caliph Vathek, p. 245, and 319. T.

and afterwards, that ſudden but eaſy and elegant change of the perſons [3] ?

" Becauſe

[3] I apprehend there is no change of perſon till the 14th verſe; for the 9th verſe I take to be of quite a different nature.

" For thou, JEHOVAH, art my hope:
" Very high haſt thou placed thy refuge."

There are many interpretations of this period, which are differently approved by different perſons. One of theſe is, that the firſt member conſiſts of an addreſs from the believer to God, and the ſecond of a reply from the Prophet to the believer: which is extremely harſh and improbable, although the plain and obvious conſtruction of the paſſage favours this opinion. Others, among which are the old tranſlators, ſuppoſe, that in the ſecond line there is no change of perſons at all, but that JEHOVAH is ſtill ſpoken of:

" Who haſt placed thy dwelling on high :"

which is altogether nothing. Others, in fine, to avoid theſe abſurdities, have fallen into ſtill greater; for they give quite a new turn to the ſentence, altering the conſtruction in this manner:

" For thou, JEHOVAH, who art my hope,
" Haſt placed thy refuge very high :"

But this I think will ſcarcely be endured by a good ear, which is ever ſo little accuſtomed to the Hebrew idiom. THEODORET formerly made a different attempt upon the paſſage;

" Becauſe he hath loved me, therefore will I
" deliver him:
" I will exalt him, for he hath known my name."

If

" There is wanting to the conſtruction of the ſen-
" tence, THOU HAST SAID, *thou Lord art my hope.*
" This is the uſual idiom of the prophetic writings, and
" eſpecially of the Pſalms."

I have very little doubt that this is the true ſenſe of the paſſage. If, however, this ellipſis be unpleaſing to the reader (and I confeſs it is very harſh) we muſt, I believe, at laſt have recourſe to the correction of Biſhop Hare, one of the ableſt of critics; who thinks, that for אתה we ſhould read אמרת. It is indeed rather a bold conjecture, yet not improbable, if we conſider the parallel places, PSALM xvi. 2. (where אמרתי ſeems to have been the reading followed by all the old tranſlators, except the CHAL. " and alſo occurs in three MSS." K.) Ps. xxxi. 15. cxl. 7. cxlii. 6. But what if we read מחסי, with only the change of a ſingle letter? " For thee (that is as " *to thee*) JEHOVAH is thy hope." This correction was ſuggeſted to me by the ingenious Mr. MERRICK, who has lately publiſhed a TRANSLATION OF THE PSALMS INTO ENGLISH VERSE; a work of great erudition, of infinite taſte and elegance, and replete with all the choiceſt beauties of poetry. *Author's Note.*

For thou, JEHOVAH, art my hope;
Very high haſt thou placed thy habitation.

I believe there is no occaſion in this inſtance to practiſe on the original. The imagery here remotely alluded to, is placed in a fuller point of view by Habakkuk, chap. ii. ver. 9.

" Woe

If any reader will carefully weigh and conſider the nature and dignity of this imagery, having due reſpect at the ſame time to the principles of the myſtical allegory, I am perſuaded he will agree with me, that ſomething of a myſtical deſign is concealed under the literal meaning of this Pſalm. Without a queſtion, the pious perſon [*], the king, or high-prieſt perhaps, who in the literal ſenſe is the principal character of the poem, is meant in reality to repreſent ſome greater

" Woe unto him who coveteth an evil covetouſneſs for his
" houſe;
" That he may ſet his neſt on high;
" That he may be delivered from the power of evil."

And Obadiah, chap. i. ver. 3.

" He that dwelleth in the clifts of the rock, the height of
" his habitation,
" Hath ſaid in his heart, Who ſhall bring me down to
" the ground?
" Though thou exalt thyſelf as the eagle,
" And though thou ſet thy neſt among the ſtars,
" Thence will I bring thee down, ſaith JEHOVAH."

S. H.

[*] The LXX. CHALD. VULG. SYR. ARAB. ÆTHIOP. prefix the name of David to this Pſalm. The Jews ſuppoſe it to relate to the Meſſiah. See alſo MATT. iv. 6. LUKE iv. 10, 11. *Author's Note.*

and

and ſublimer perſonage. But leaving this part of the ſubject to the inveſtigation of the divine, I ſubmit it to any critic of true taſte and diſcernment, whether the third ode of the fourth book of Horace (the beauty of which has been juſtly celebrated, and which bears a great reſemblance to that under our conſideration) is not greatly excelled by the ſacred poet, as well in grace and elegance, as in force and dignity [5].

The

[5] At a very early period of life I amuſed myſelf with tranſlating ſome of the Odes of Horace into Engliſh verſe. The Ode alluded to in the text was one of thoſe which I attempted. I ſubjoin my tranſlation on this occaſion, merely becauſe I think it gives the ſenſe of the original more completely than Francis's verſion, and the *Engliſh* Reader will probably wiſh to ſee the Ode which is brought into compariſon with that of the Pſalmiſt.

TO MELPOMENE.

He, on whoſe early natal hour
Thou, queen of verſe! haſt ſweetly ſmil'd,
Breath'd all thy faſcinating power,
And mark'd him for thy favourite child:

He emulates no victor's place,
Nor mixes in the Iſthmian games;
Nor, in the arduous chariot race,
Th' Achaian trophies anxious claims.

He

The eighty-firſt Pſalm will ſerve as another example upon this occaſion, being pervaded by an exquiſite union of ſublimity and ſweetneſs. It is an ode compoſed for the feaſt of Trumpets in the firſt new moon of the civil year [6]. The exordium contains an exhortation to celebrate the praiſes of the

He ne'er, adorn'd with conquering bays,
And the proud pomp of baneful war,
Shall catch the vagrant voice of praiſe,
While captive kings ſurround his car:

But where the fertile Tiber glides,
To ſecret ſhades ſhall oft retire;
And there ſhall charm the liſt'ning tides,
And tune the ſoft Æolian lyre.

Thy nobleſt ſons, Imperial Rome!
Aſſign to me the laureate crown;
And Envy now abaſh'd and dumb,
Nor dares to ſpeak, nor dares to frown.

O Goddeſs of the vocal ſhell!
Whoſe power can ſway both earth and ſea,
Can the mute fiſhes teach t' excel
The dying cygnet's melody:

To thee, ſweet Muſe! I owe this fame,
That e'er I pleas'd the gift is thine;
That, as I paſs, fond crowds exclaim—
"The Roman bard! the man divine!" T.

[6] See RELAND. *Antiq. Heb.* iv. 7.

Almighty

Almighty with muſic and ſong, and (as is frequent in theſe productions of the Hebrews) is replete with animation and joy, even to exultation:

" Sing unto God our ſtrength;
" A ſong of triumph to the God of Jacob."

The different inſtruments of muſic are named, as is common in the Lyric compoſitions of all other nations:

" Take the pſaltery, bring hither the timbrel,
" The pleaſant harp, with the lute."

The trumpet is particularly alluded to, becauſe the ſolemn uſe of it on their great feſtivals was preſcribed by the Moſaic law. The commemoration of the giving of the law, aſſociated with the ſound of the trumpet (which was the ſignal of liberty) [7] introduces, in a manner ſpontaneouſly, the miſeries of the Egyptian bondage, the recovery of their freedom, and the communication with God upon mount Sinai (the awfulneſs of which is expreſſed in a very few words, " the ſecret

[7] See LEV. xxiii. 24. NUM. xxix. 1. and LEV. xxv. 9, 10.

" place

" place of thunder") and finally the contention with their Creator at the waters of Meribah. The mention of Meribah introduces another idea, namely, the ingratitude and contumacy of the Iſraelites, who appear to have been ever unmindful of the favours and indulgence of their heavenly Benefactor. The remainder of the ode, therefore, contains an affectionate expoſtulation of God with his people, a confirmation of his former promiſes, and a tender complaint, that his favourable intentions towards them have been ſo long prevented by their diſobedience. Thus the object and end of this poem appears to be an exhortation to obedience from the conſideration of the paternal love, the beneficence, and the promiſes of the Deity; and we have ſeen with how much art, elegance, variety, and ingenuity, this is accompliſhed. In order to complete the beauty of this compoſition, the concluſion is replete with all the graces of ſentiment, imagery, and diction. The ſudden and frequent change of perſons is remarkable; but it is by no means harſh or obſcure. Some allowance is however to be made for the Hebrew idiom, as well as for the ſtate of the author's

author's mind: he is not under the influence of art but of nature; through the impetuoſity of paſſion, therefore, his tranſitions are frequent from figure and alluſion to plain language, and back again with a kind of deſultory inconſtancy.

In the laſt Lecture I treated in general of the diſpoſition and arrangement of Lyric compoſition, and endeavoured, in ſome degree, to define its uſual ſymmetry and outline. But on abſtruſe and difficult ſubjects, example is of more avail than the utmoſt accuracy of deſcription. To him, therefore, who wiſhes to form a correct idea of this kind of poem, I will venture to recommend the Pſalm which we have juſt examined; not doubting, that if he can make himſelf maſter of its general character, genius, and arrangement, he will feel perfectly ſatisfied concerning the nature and form of a perfect ode.

In both theſe ſpecimens, the ſtyle and cadence of the whole poem flows in one equal and uniform tenour; but there are others, which are more changeable and diverſified, more unequal both in ſtyle and ſentiment. Theſe, although they occaſionally incline to

the

the character of ſweetneſs, and occaſionally to that of ſublimity, may nevertheleſs (though upon a different principle) be properly claſſed among the odes of this intermediate ſtyle. Such are thoſe which, from a mild and gentle exordium, riſe gradually to ſublimity, both in the ſubject and ſentiments; ſuch alſo are thoſe, which commence in a mournful ſtrain, and conclude with exultation and triumph. Such, in fine, are all thoſe in which the ſtyle or matter is in any reſpect diverſified and unequal. This inequality of ſtyle is perfectly conſiſtent with the nature of Lyric compoſition; for variety is one of the greateſt ornaments, if not eſſentials, of the ode. Since, therefore, for the ſake of variety, Lyric writers in particular are indulged in the liberty of frequent digreſſions; that boldneſs in thus diverging from the ſubject is not only excuſeable, but on many occaſions is really worthy of commendation. Poſſibly a brief inquiry into the nature of thoſe liberties which the Hebrew poets have allowed themſelves in this reſpect, or rather into the general method and principles of their Lyric compoſitions, will not

not be thought altogether unſeaſonable in this place.

By far the greater part of the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews, is occupied wholly in the celebration of the power and goodneſs of Almighty God, in extolling his kindneſs and beneficence to his choſen people, and in imploring his aſſiſtance and favour in time of adverſity: in other words, the uſual ſubjects of theſe odes are ſo connected with every part of the Sacred Hiſtory, as to afford ample ſcope for thoſe digreſſions which are moſt pleaſing, and moſt congenial to this ſpecies of compoſition. Thus, whether the theme be gay or mournful; whether the events which they celebrate be proſperous or adverſe; whether they return thanks to God their deliverer for aſſiſtance in trouble, or with the humility of ſuppliants acknowledge the juſtice of the divine correction; the memory of former times ſpontaneouſly occurs, and a variety of incidents and circumſtances, of times, of ſeaſons, of countries, of nations, all the miracles in Egypt, in the wilderneſs, in Judea, are preſented to their recollection: and all theſe ſo naturally connect with the ſubject, that whatever of ornament

is

is deduced from them, ſo far from appearing foreign to it, ſeems rather an eſſential part of the principal matter. It may, therefore, be with modeſty aſſerted of the Hebrew ode, that from the nature of the ſubjects, which it uſually embraces, it is poſſeſſed of ſo eaſy an acceſs to ſome of the moſt elegant ſources of poetical imagery, and has conſequently ſo many opportunities for agreeable digreſſion; that with unbounded freedom and uncommon variety, are united the moſt perfect order, and the moſt pleaſing uniformity.

The happy boldneſs of Pindar in his digreſſions is deſervedly celebrated; but as he was very differently ſituated from thoſe poets who are at preſent under our conſideration, ſo the nature of his ſubject, and the principles of his compoſition, are altogether different from theirs; and a different reaſon is to be aſſigned for the liberties which he aſſumed in his Lyric productions. We are in no want of materials to enable us to form a perfect judgment of the genius of Pindar; there are about forty of his odes remaining, and the ſubject of them all is exactly ſimilar. They are all compoſed in celebra-

tion of ſome victorious chief, whoſe praiſe is heightened and illuſtrated by the circumſtances of his birth, anceſtry, manners, or country. Since, therefore, this poet was profeſſedly the herald of the Olympic conquerors, unleſs he had determined to aſſume great liberty in treating of thoſe topics, and even on ſome occaſions to have recourſe to topics very foreign to the principal ſubject, his poems muſt have been little better than a ſtale and diſguſting repetition. His apology, therefore, is neceſſity, and on this ground he has obtained not only pardon but commendation; and many things, which in another poet could neither be defended nor probably endured, in Pindar have been approved and extolled. Leſt I ſhould ſeem to aſſert raſhly on this occaſion, I will explain myſelf by an example. The third of the Pythian odes is inſcribed to Hiero, at that time labouring under a grievous and chronical diſeaſe. The poet taking advantage of the opportunity to impart a degree of variety to his poem, introduces it with a ſolemn addreſs, invoking the medical aid of Chiron or Æſculapius, if it be poſſible for them to reviſit the earth. But ſurely, on

ſuch

ſuch an occaſion, it would be excuſeable in no writer but Pindar to expend more than one hundred verſes, that is, above half the poem, on the hiſtory of Æſculapius. Nor indeed could we eaſily pardon it in Pindar himſelf, but from the conſideration that he had already written an ode (the fourth) in praiſe of the ſame Hiero, upon a victory obtained in the Olympic games. But we are willing to excuſe the boldneſs of a poet, who, even with a degree of raſh impetuoſity, eſcapes from ſuch narrow limits into a more ſpacious field. It is therefore no diſcommendation of the Hebrew poets to ſay, that in this reſpect they are materially different from Pindar; nor does it detract from the merit of Pindar to aſſert, that, from the more favourable circumſtances of the Hebrews, their Lyric Poetry is more genuine and perfect.

The ſeventy-ſeventh Pſalm will afford ſome illuſtration of what has been remarked concerning the nature and economy of the Hebrew ode. This Pſalm is compoſed in what I call the intermediate ſtyle, and is of that diverſified and unequal kind which aſcends from a cool and temperate exordium

to a high degree of ſublimity. The Prophet, oppreſſed with a heavy weight of affliction, diſplays the extreme dejection and perturbation of his ſoul, and moſt elegantly and pathetically deſcribes the conflicts and internal conteſts to which he is ſubjected, before he is enabled to riſe from the depths of woe to any degree of hope or confidence. In the character of a ſuppliant he firſt pours forth his earneſt prayers to the God of his hope:

" I lifted up my voice unto God and cried;
" I lifted up my voice unto God, that he ſhould
" hear me."

But even prayers afford him no ſufficient conſolation. He next endeavours to mitigate his ſorrow by the remembrance of former times; but this, on the contrary, only ſeems to exaggerate his ſufferings, by the compariſon of his preſent adverſity with his former happineſs, and extorts from him the following pathetic expoſtulation:

" Will the Lord reject me for ever?
" And will he be reconciled no more?
" Is his mercy eternally ceaſed;

" Doth

" Doth his promiſe fail from generation to ge-
" neration?
" Hath God forgotten to be merciful?
" Or hath he in anger ſhut up his pity?"

Again, recollecting the nature of the divine diſpenſations in chaſtiſing man, " the change " of the right-hand of the Moſt High;" in other words, the different methods by which the Almighty ſeeks the ſalvation of his people, appearing frequently to frown upon and perſecute thoſe " in whom he de-" lighteth:" reconſidering alſo the vaſt ſe-ries of mercies which he had beſtowed upon his choſen people; the miracles which he had wrought in their favour, in a word, the goodneſs, the holineſs, the power of the great Ruler of the univerſe; with all the ar-dour of gratitude and affection, he burſts forth into a ſtrain of praiſe and exultation. In this paſſage we are at a loſs which to ad-mire moſt, the eaſe and grace with which the digreſſion is made, the choice of the in-cidents, the magnificence of the imagery, or the force and elegance of the diction.

" Thy way, O God, is in holineſs;
" What God is great as our God?

" Thou art the God that doeſt wonders;
" Thou haſt made known thy ſtrength among
" the nations:
" With thy arm haſt thou redeemed thy people,
" The ſons of Jacob and Joſeph.
" The waters ſaw thee, O God!
" The waters ſaw thee, and trembled;
" The depths alſo were troubled.
" The clouds overflowed with water;
" The ſkies ſent forth thunder;
" Thine arrows alſo went abroad:
" The voice of thy thunder was in the atmo-
" ſphere;
" Thy lightnings enlightened the world,
" The earth trembled, and was diſturbed."

The other example, to which I ſhall refer you on this occaſion, is compoſed upon quite a different plan; for it declines gradually from an exordium uncommonly ſplendid and ſublime, to a gentler and more moderate ſtrain, to the ſofteſt expreſſions of piety and devotion. The whole compoſition abounds with great variety of both ſentiment and imagery. You will, from theſe circumſtances, almoſt conjecture that I am alluding to the nineteenth Pſalm. The glory of God is demonſtrated in his works both of nature

nature and providence. By exhibiting it, however, in an entire ſtate, though in modern verſe, you will more readily perceive the order, method, and arrangement of this beautiful compoſition.

PSALM XIX. [s]

" God the heavens aloud proclaim
" Through their wide-extended frame,
" And the firmament each hour
" Speaks the wonders of his power:
" Day to the ſucceeding day
" Joys the notice to convey,
" And the nights, in ceaſeleſs round,
" Each to each repeats the ſound;
" Prompt, without or ſpeech or tongue,
" In his praiſe to form the ſong.
" Pleas'd to hear their voice extend
" Far as to her utmoſt end;
" Earth the heaven-taught knowledge boaſts
" Through her many-languag'd coaſts.

[s] I have given Mr. Merrick's tranſlation of this Pſalm, as more calculated to illuſtrate the deſign of our author in quoting it. I cannot, however, omit mentioning, that Mr. Addiſon's paraphraſe of a part of this Pſalm infinitely excels every tranſlation that I have ſeen, as well in ſublimity as elegance; and is indeed, in my opinion, the moſt beautiful and perfect ſpecimen of ſacred poetry extant in Engliſh verſe. T.

" While the ſun, above her head,
" Sees his tabernacle ſpread;
" And, from out his chamber bright,
" Like a bridegroom ſprings to fight:
" See him, with gigantic pace,
" Joyous run his deſtin'd race.
" Now, to fartheſt regions borne,
" Onward ſpeed, and now return;
" And to all, with welcome ray,
" Life and genial warmth convey.
" Warmth and life each thankful heart
" Feels thy law, Great God! impart;
" Clear from every ſpot it ſhines,
" And the guilt-ſtain'd thought refines;
" Truth's firm baſe its fame upholds,
" While it myſteries unfolds;
" Which the childlike mind explores,
" And to heavenly ſcience ſoars.
" Preſt with ſorrows, doubts, and fears,
" What like this the ſpirit chears?
" What ſo perfect, what ſo pure?
" What to Reaſon's eye obſcure
" Can ſuch wond'rous light afford,
" As the dictates of thy word?
" Where thy fear its fruit matures,
" (Fruit that endleſs years endures).
" There the mind, to vice a foe,
" Pants thy bleſt decrees to know;
" And (its will to thine ſubdu'd)
" Owns them wiſe, and juſt, and good;

" Nor

" Nor can gold ſuch worth acquire
" From the ſev'nth exploring fire;
" Nor the labour of the bees
" Can in ſweetneſs vie with theſe:
" Taught by them, thy ſervant's breaſt
" Joys the bleſſings to atteſt,
" Heap'd on thoſe, whoſe hearts ſincere,
" Learn thy precepts to revere.
" Beſt Inſtructor, from thy ways,
" Who can tell how oft he ſtrays?
" Purge me from the guilt that lies
" Wrapt within my heart's diſguiſe;
" Let me thence, by thee renew'd,
" Each preſumptous ſin exclude:
" So my lot ſhall ne'er be join'd
" With the men whoſe impious mind,
" Fearleſs of thy juſt command,
" Braves the vengeance of thy hand.
" Let my tongue, from error free,
" Speak the words approv'd by thee;
" To thy all obſerving eyes
" Let my thoughts accepted riſe:
" While I thus thy name adore,
" And thy healing grace implore,
" Bleſt Redeëmer bow thine ear,
" God my ſtrength, propitious hear!"

LECTURE XXVII.

OF THE SUBLIME STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

The third ſpecies of the Hebrew Ode, the characteriſtic of which is ſublimity.—This ſublimity reſults from three ſources.—From the general form and arrangement of the poem exemplified in the lth *and* xxivth *Pſalm.—From the greatneſs of the ſentiments and the force of the language.—The Ode of Moſes on paſſing the Red Sea explained and illuſtrated.—The brevity of the Hebrew ſtyle.—The* xxixth *Pſalm in Engliſh verſe.*

SUBLIMITY was mentioned as the characteriſtic of a third ſpecies of the Hebrew ode. But having already treated very copiouſly of the ſublime in general, both as the effect of ſentiment and expreſſion, our preſent inveſtigation muſt be confined to that which is peculiar to this ſpecies of poetry. Now the ſublimity of Lyric compoſitions reſults either from the plan, the order and arrangement of the poem; or from thoſe common ſources which I formerly ſpecified, the ſentiments and the ſtyle; or, in ſome caſes, from an union of all, when an aggregate perfection is produced from

the

the beauty of the arrangement, the dignity of the ſentiments, and the ſplendour of the diction. I ſhall endeavour to exhibit a few examples in each kind; and indeed this ſubject is every way deſerving our attention, ſince it relates to what may be eſteemed the perfection of the Hebrew poetry, for its chief commendation is ſublimity, and its ſublimeſt ſpecies is the ode.

Let us therefore conſider in the firſt place what degree of ſublimity the mere form and diſpoſition of a Lyric Poem can impart to a ſubject not in itſelf ſublime. We have an example of this in the fiftieth Pſalm; the ſubject of which is of the didactic kind, and belongs to the moral part of theology. It is at firſt ſerious and practical, with very little of ſublimity or ſplendour: it ſets forth, that the divine favour is not to be conciliated by ſacrifices, or by any of the external rites and ſervices of religion, but rather by ſincere piety, and by the devout effuſions of a grateful heart: and yet, that even theſe will not be accepted without the ſtricteſt attention to juſtice, and every practical virtue. It conſiſts therefore of two parts: in the firſt the devout, but ignorant and ſuperſtitious

perſtitious worſhipper is reproved; and in the ſecond the hypocritical pretender to virtue and religion. Each part of the ſubject, if we regard the imagery and the diction only, is treated rather with variety and elegance, than with ſublimity; but if the general effect, if the plot and machinery of the whole be conſidered, ſcarcely any thing can appear more truly magnificent. The great Author of nature, by a ſolemn decree, convokes the whole human race, to be witneſs of the judgment which he is about to execute upon his people; the auguſt tribunal is eſtabliſhed in Sion:

" JEHOVAH, God of gods,
" Hath ſpoken, and hath ſummoned the earth,
" From the riſing to the ſetting of the ſun:
" From Sion, from the perfection of beauty, God
" hath ſhined."

The majeſty of God is depicted by imagery aſſumed from the deſcent upon mount Sinah, which, as I formerly obſerved, is one of the common-places that ſupply ornaments of this kind:

" Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not be ſilent;
" A fire ſhall devour before him,
" And a mighty whirlwind ſhall ſurround him."

The

The heavens and the earth are invoked as witneſſes, which is a pompous form of expreſſion common with the Hebrew writers[1]:

" He ſhall call the heavens from on high;
" And the earth to the judgment of his people."

At length the Almighty is perſonally introduced pronouncing his ſentence, which conſtitutes the remainder of the ode; and the admirable ſublimity and ſplendour of the exordium is continued through the whole. There is in Horace an ode upon a ſimilar ſubject[2], and it is not enough to ſay, that he has treated it in his uſual manner, with elegance and variety, for he has done more than could be expected from a perſon unenlightened by divine truth, he has treated it with piety and ſolemnity. But that high degree of ſublimity, to which the Pſalmiſt riſes upon ſuch occaſions, is only to be attained by the Hebrew Muſe; for it is a truth univerſally acknowledged, that no religion whatever, no poetic hiſtory is provided with a ſtore of imagery ſo ſtriking and ſo magni-

[1] Compare DEUT. xxxii. 1. ISA. i. 2.

[2] See HORAT. Lib. iii. Od. xxiii.

ficent,

ficent, ſo capable of embelliſhing a ſcene, which may be juſtly accounted the moſt ſublime that the human imagination is able to comprehend.

The next example, which I ſhall produce, will be found in ſome meaſure different from the former, inaſmuch as the ſubject itſelf is poſſeſſed of the higheſt dignity and ſplendour, though ſtill no inconſiderable part of the ſublimity is to be attributed to the general plan and arrangement of the poem. The induction of the ark of God to mount Sion by David, gave occaſion to the twenty-fourth Pſalm [3]. The removal of the ark was celebrated in a great aſſembly of the people, and with ſuitable ſplendour during every part of the ceremony. The Levites led the proceſſion, accompanied by a great variety of vocal and inſtrumental muſic; and this Ode appears to have been ſung to the people when they arrived at the ſummit of the mountain. The exordium is expreſſive of the ſupreme and infinite dominion of God, ariſing from the right of creation:

[3] See 2 SAM. vi. 1 CHRON. xv.

"The

" The earth is JEHOVAH's, and the fulneſs thereof;
" The world and all that inhabit therein.
" For upon the ſeas hath he founded it,
" And upon the floods hath he eſtabliſhed it."

How aſtoniſhing the favour and condeſcenſion! how extraordinary the teſtimony of his love, when he ſelected from his infinite dominion a peculiar ſeat, and a people for himſelf! What a copious return of gratitude, of holineſs, of righteouſneſs, and of all human virtues, does ſuch an obligation demand! " Behold," ſays Moſes, addreſſing the Iſraelites, " The heaven, and the " heaven of heavens, is JEHOVAH's, thy " God, the earth alſo, and all that it con- " taineth. Only he had a delight in thy " fathers to love them, and their poſterity " after them, and he choſe you above all " people as it is this day [*]." Such is evidently the reaſoning of David in the following paſſage, though the chain of argument is not quite ſo directly diſplayed:

" Who ſhall aſcend unto the mountain of JE-
" HOVAH;
" And who ſhall ſtand in the ſeat of his holineſs?

[*] DEUT. x. 14—16.

" He

" He whoſe hands are innocent, and whoſe heart
" is pure:
" Who hath not put his truſt in vanity [5],
" Nor ſworn for the purpoſe of deceit.
" He ſhall receive a bleſſing from JEHOVAH,
" And righteouſneſs from the God of his ſalva-
" tion.
" This is the generation that ſeeketh him;
" That ſeeketh the face of the God of Jacob [6]."

Thus

[5] נשא נפשו, this phraſe denotes confidence, hope, deſire. See Ps. xxv. 1. lxxxvi. 4. cxliii. 8. alſo DEUT. xxiv. 15. JER. xxii. 27. EZEK. xxiv. 25. שוא, an idol: לשוא יקטרו, " burn incenſe to vain gods." JER. xviii. 15. *Author's Note.*

" Who have not ſworn falſely by their life. "I offer this tranſlation in preference to our author's, " Who hath " not put his truſt in vanity, or in vain gods," on the authority of M. MICHAELIS; who juſtly obſerves, that the tranſlation of the words *naſa leſheva* is to *perjure* or *forſwear*, and not to *ſwear by falſe gods*, as is evident from EXOD. xx. 7. and it is properly applied to the naming in a lie the name of JEHOVAH, their *own life*, or the *ſacred cities*, (Ps. cxxx. 20.) or any other thing which was accounted ſacred or dear to them. T.

[6] It ought to be read either with the LXX. VULG. ARAB. ÆTHIOP. פני אל יעקב; or with the SYR. פניך אל יעקב, which is much the ſame. " It is פניך אלהי יעקב in a MS. " in poſſeſſion of EBNER ESCHENBACH, Norimberg. " See NADLERI *Diſſertat. de* EBNERI *Codicibus MStis.* " 1748." K. The *holy ark*, and the *ſhecinah* which remained upon it, the ſymbol of the divine preſence, is

called

Thus far is expreſſive, on the one hand, of the infinite goodneſs and condeſcenſion of God to the children of Iſrael; and on the other hand, of their indiſpenſible obligation to piety and virtue; ſince he had deigned to make their nation the peculiar ſeat of his miraculous providence, and to honour them with his actual preſence. We may now conceive the proceſſion to have arrived at the gates of the tabernacle. While the ark is brought in, the Levites, divided into two choirs, ſing alternately the remainder of the Pſalm. Indeed, it is not impoſſible that this

called the *face of God*: and to ſeek the face of God, is to appear before the ark, to worſhip at the ſanctuary of God; which was required of the Iſraelites thrice a year. See 2 SAM. xxi. 1. 2 CHRON. vii. 14. Ps. xxvii. 8. EXOD. xxiii. 17.

"Seek JEHOVAH and his ſtrength,
"Seek his face for ever." Ps. cv. 4.

Where it is worthy of remark, that עז (his ſtrength) is parallel and ſynonymous to פנו (his face) and ſignifies the ark of God: compare Ps. lxxviii. 61. cxxxii. 8. They but trifle, who endeavour to extort any thing reaſonable from the common reading. Further, I am of opinion, that in ver. 9th the verb ישרצו in *Niphal* ought to be repeated: ſo all the old tranſlators ſeem to have read it.

Author's Note.

mode of ſinging was purſued through every part of the Ode; but towards the concluſion the fact will not admit of a doubt. On the whole, whether we regard the ſubject, the imagery, or ſtyle of this compoſition, it will be found to poſſeſs a certain ſimple and unaffected (and therefore admirable) ſublimity:

" Liſt up your heads, O ye gates!
" And be ye liſt up, ye everlaſting doors[7]!
" And the King of Glory ſhall enter.
" Who is this King of Glory?
" JEHOVAH mighty and powerful,
" JEHOVAH powerful in war.
" Liſt up your heads, O ye gates;
" And be ye liſt up, ye everlaſting doors!
" And the King of Glory ſhall enter.
" Who is this King of Glory?
" JEHOVAH of hoſts, he is the King of Glory."

You will eaſily perceive, that the beauty and ſublimity obſervable in this Pſalm are

[7] I would prefer *ye ancient gates*, that is, *long ſince enobled* by the worſhip of the true God. Thus Jacob and Moſes ſpeak of the *ancient mountains*, the *everlaſting hills*, &c. The meaning of the verſe is, " The gates, which " were mean and contracted before, and unworthy of " JEHOVAH, ſhould now be extended and enlarged." M.

of

of ſuch a peculiar kind as to be perfectly adapted to the ſubject and the occaſion, and to that particular ſolemnity for which it was compoſed. You will perceive too, that unleſs we have ſome reſpect to theſe points, the principal force and elegance will be loſt; and even the propriety of the ſentiments, the ſplendour of the diction, the beauty and order of the arrangement, will be almoſt totally obſcured. If ſuch be the ſtate of the caſe in this ſingle inſtance, it is ſurely not unreaſonable to conclude, that it is not the only one which ſtands in need of the light of hiſtory to caſt a ſplendour on its beauties. It is ſurely not unreaſonable to infer, that much of the harmony, propriety, and elegance of the ſacred poetry muſt paſs unperceived by us, who can only form diſtant conjectures of the general deſign, but are totally ignorant of the particular application[s]. Thus of neceſſity much of the delicacy

[s] I wiſh moſt earneſtly, that this obſervation of our author might be properly attended to by the commentators upon the Pſalms: ſince whoever neglects it muſt of neceſſity fall into very groſs errors. There are ſome who, attempting to explain the Pſalms from the hiſtorical parts

licacy of ſentiment, much of the felicity of alluſion, and the force of expreſſion, muſt, by

of Scripture, act as if every occurrence were known to them, and as if nothing had happened during the reign of David which was not committed to writing. This, however, conſidering the extreme brevity of the Sacred Hiſtory, and the number and magnitude of the facts which it relates, muſt of courſe be very far from the truth. The cauſes and motives of many wars are not at all adverted to, the battles that are related are few, and thoſe the principal. Who can doubt, though ever ſo unexperienced in military affairs, that many things occurred, which are not mentioned, between the deſertion of Jeruſalem by David, and that famous battle, which exinguiſhed the rebellion of Abſalom? The camp muſt have been frequently removed, as circumſtances varied, to places of greater ſafety; much trouble muſt have been had in collecting the veteran ſoldiers from different poſts, and not a few battles and ſkirmiſhes muſt have occurred, before the exiled king could ſo far preſume upon the ſtrength and increaſe of his army as to quit the mountains, and try the open field. This laſt battle being fought on this ſide Jordan, in the foreſt of Ephraim, is it not natural to ſuppoſe, that ſomething muſt have occurred to compel Abſalom, whoſe camp was beyond Jordan, to return into Paleſtine, properly ſo called: poſſibly the preſervation of the royal city? Or is it poſſible to compare the hiſtory of 2 SAM. viii. 13. with Ps. lx. and not to perceive, that ſome unfortunate events muſt have happened previous to the victories over the Syrians and Idumeans, and that affairs muſt have been unhappily ſituated in Paleſtine itſelf; that even the royal city

by the hand of time, be caſt into ſhade; or rather I ſhould ſay, totally ſuppreſſed and extin-

city muſt have been in danger; ſince the Idumeans penetrated even ſo far as the valley of Salt, which is ſcarcely diſtant one day's journey. If all theſe things be omitted; if, moreover, in the book of Samuel no ſufficiently expreſs mention is made of the Aſſyrians, with whom David certainly waged war, Ps. lxxxiii. 9. why ſhould we not ſuppoſe that many leſſer facts are omitted in the hiſtory, to which however a poet might allude, as natural and proper matter of amplification? But to return to the point I ſet out from, thoſe who will not allow themſelves to be ignorant of a great part of the Jewiſh hiſtory, will be apt to explain more of the Pſalms upon the ſame principle, and as relating to the ſame facts, than they ought: whence the poetry will appear tame and languid, abounding in words, but with little variety of deſcription or ſentiment.

There are commentators of another claſs, who take inexcuſeable liberties of invention, and inſtead of reſorting to the records of the ancients, endeavour to ſupply facts from their own ingenuity: in which way ſome of the biographers of David have greatly indulged themſelves, and particularly DELANY. For example, in the 7th Chap. of the 3d Vol. he takes it for granted, from Ps. xxxviii. and xli. that at the time when Abſalom formed the rebellion, David was ill of the ſmall-pox (a diſeaſe which we cannot pretend to aſſert from any hiſtorical proof to have been known at that period, and from which the king at his time of life could ſcarcely have recovered) and to ſhew that nothing could exceed

extinguiſhed. The attentive reader will, indeed, frequently feel a want of information, concerning the author, the age, and the occaſion of a poem; ſtill more frequently will he find occaſion to lament his own ignorance with reſpect to many facts and circumſtances cloſely connected with the principal ſubject, and on which, perhaps, its moſt ſtriking ornaments depend. This we experience in ſome degree in the admirable poem of Deborah; and this I ſeem to experience in the ſixty-eighth Pſalm, though it appears to have ſome affinity with the ſubject of that which we have juſt examined, ſince it adopts, in the place of an exordium, that well-known form of expreſſion which was commonly made uſe of on the removal of the ark [9]:

his raſhneſs in inventing, he adds, that by means of the diſeaſe he loſt the uſe of his right eye for ſome time.

Others have recourſe to myſtical interpretations, or thoſe hiſtorical paſſages which they do not underſtand they convert into prophecies: into none of theſe errors would mankind have fallen, but through the perſuaſion, that the whole hiſtory of the Jews was minutely detailed to them; and that there were no circumſtances with which they were unacquainted. M.

[9] Compare NUM. x. 35.

"Let

" Let God ariſe; let his enemies be ſcattered;
" And let thoſe that hate him flee from his pre-
" ſence."

But almoſt every part of this moſt noble poem is involved in an impenetrable darkneſs. It would otherwiſe have afforded a ſingular example of the true ſublime; the ſcattered rays of which, breaking forth with difficulty through the thick clouds that ſurround it, we yet behold with a mixture of admiration and pleaſure [10].

The moſt perfect example that I know of the other ſpecies of the ſublime ode, which I pointed out (that I mean which poſſeſſes a ſublimity dependant wholly upon the greatneſs of the conceptions, and the dignity of the language, without any peculiar excellence in the form and arrangement) is the thankſgiving ode of Moſes, compoſed after paſſing the Red Sea [11]. Through every part of this poem the moſt perfect plainneſs and

[10] Having profeſſed above, that I admired not ſo much the ſublimity as the ſweetneſs of David's Lyric Poetry, I think it my duty to make an exception in favour of this Pſalm, than which I do not recollect any thing more ſublime in the whole book of Pſalms. M.

[11] EXOD. XV.

ſimplicity is maintained; there is nothing artificial, nothing laboured, either in reſpect to method or invention. Every part of it breathes the ſpirit of nature and of paſſion: joy, admiration, and love, united with piety and devotion, burſt forth ſpontaneouſly in their native colours. A miracle of the moſt intereſting nature to the Iſraelites is diſplayed. The ſea divides, and the waters are raiſed into vaſt heaps on either ſide, while they paſs over; but their enemies, in attempting to purſue, are overwhelmed by the reflux of the waves. Theſe circumſtances are all expreſſed in language ſuitable to the emotions which they produced, abrupt, fervid, conciſe, animated, with a frequent repetition of the ſame ſentiments:

"I will ſing to JEHOVAH, for he is very highly
"exalted;
"The horſe and the rider he hath o'erwhelmed
"in the ſea."

This conſtitutes the proem of the ode; and is alſo repeated occaſionally by the female part of the band in the manner of a modern chorus, being briefly expreſſive of the general ſubject. The ſame idea, however, occurs

curs in ſeveral parts of the poem, with conſiderable variation in the language and figures:

" The chariots of Pharoah and his forces he caſt
" into the ſea;
" And his choſen leaders were drowned in the
" Red Sea.
" The depths have covered them;
" They went down into the abyſs as a ſtone."

And again:

" The enemy ſaid, I will purſue, I will over-
" take;
" I will divide the ſpoil, my ſoul ſhall be ſatis-
" fied [12];
" I will draw the ſword, my hand ſhall deſtroy
" them.
" Thou didſt blow with thy breath; the ſea co-
" vered them:
" They ſunk like lead in the great waters."

Nor do even theſe repetitions ſatisfy the author:

" Who is like unto thee among the gods, O
" JEHOVAH!
" Who is like unto thee, glorious in ſanctity!

[12] " This is explained by one of the Rabbinical " writers, *It will be filled from them*; that is, ſays ano- " ther, *by taking their wealth or ſubſtance.*" H.

" Fearful

" Fearful in praiſes, performing miracles!
" Thou extendedſt thy right-hand, the earth
" ſwallowed them."

In theſe examples is diſplayed all the genuine force of nature and paſſion, which the efforts of art will emulate in vain. Here we behold the paſſions ſtruggling for vent, labouring with a copiouſneſs of thought and a poverty of expreſſion, and on that very account the more expreſsly diſplayed. To take a ſtrict account of the ſublimity of this ode, would be to repeat the whole. I will only remark one quality, which is indeed congenial to all the poetry of the Hebrews, but in this poem is more than uſually predominant, I mean that brevity of diction which is ſo conducive to ſublimity of ſtyle. Diffuſe and exuberant expreſſion generally detracts from the force of the ſentiment; as in the human body, exceſſive corpulency is generally inconſiſtent with health and vigour. The Hebrews, if we contemplate any of their compoſitions as a whole, may be deemed full and copious; but if we conſider only the conſtituent parts of any production, they will be found ſparing in words, conciſe and energetic.

getic. They amplify by diverſifying, by repeating, and ſometimes by adding to the ſubject; therefore it happens, that it is frequently, on the whole, treated rather diffuſely; but ſtill every particular ſentence is conciſe and nervous in itſelf. Thus it happens in general, that neither copiouſneſs nor vigour is wanting. This brevity of ſtyle is in ſome meaſure to be attributed to the genius of the language, and in ſome meaſure to the nature of the Hebrew verſe. The moſt literal verſions therefore commonly fail in this reſpect, and conſequently ſtill leſs is to be expected from any poetical tranſlations or imitations whatever.

Moſt of thoſe qualities and perfections, which have been the ſubject of this diſquiſition, will be found in a very high degree in the twenty-ninth Pſalm. The ſupreme dominion of God, and the awfulneſs of his power, are demonſtrated from the tremendous noiſe, and the aſtoniſhing force of the thunder, which the Hebrews, by a bold but very apt figure, denominate "the voice of the "Moſt High." It is enough to ſay of it, that the ſublimity of the matter is perfectly equalled by the unaffected energy of the ſtyle.

PSALM

PSALM XXIX.

" Sing, ye ſons of might, O ſing
" Praiſe to heaven's eternal King;
" Power and ſtrength to him aſſign,
" And before his hallow'd ſhrine
" Yield the homage, that his name
" From a creature's lips may claim.
" Hark! his voice in thunder breaks;
" Huſh'd to ſilence, while he ſpeaks,
" Ocean's waves from pole to pole
" Hear the awful accents roll:
" See, as louder yet they riſe,
" Echoing through the vaulted ſkies,
" Loftieſt cedars lie o'erthrown,
" Cedars of ſteep Lebanon.
" See, uprooted from its ſeat,
" Trembling at the threat divine,
" Lebanon itſelf retreat;
" And Sirion haſte its flight to join!
" See them like the heifer borne,
" Like the beaſt whoſe pointed horn
" Strikes with dread the ſylvan train,
" Bound impetuous on the plain.
" Now the burſting clouds give way,
" And the vivid lightnings play;
" And the wilds by man untrod
" Hear, diſmay'd, th' approaching God.
" Cades! o'er thy lonely waſte,
" Oft the dreadful ſounds have paſt:

" Oft

" Oft his ſtroke the wood invades:
" Widow'd of their branchy ſhades
" Mightieſt oaks its fury know [13];
" While the pregnant hind her throe
" Inſtant feels, and on the earth
" Trembling drops th' unfiniſh'd birth.

[13] *The oaks are affected with pain, or tremble:* אלה or אילה is *an oak:* and certainly this word frequently occurs in the plural maſculine, with the inſertion of י. And in this ſenſe the SYR. has taken it, who renders it אילתא דמוץ. For the word מוץ in Syriac, as well as Hebrew, denotes motion or agitation of any kind; nor is its meaning confined to the pains of childbirth. See ISA. li. 9. " This " explanation of the word יחוללו in the ſenſe of *moving* or " *ſhaking*, is eſtabliſhed beyond a doubt upon the autho- " rity of the Arabic verb חול, to *move* or *ſhake*." H. Though the word אילתא does not appear in the Syriac Lexicons to ſignify an oak, yet it occurs four times in this ſenſe in the Syriac verſion, exactly anſwering to the Hebrew word אלה, 2 SAM. xviii. 9, 10, 14. as alſo in this place. The common tranſlations ſuppoſe this paſſage to relate to the *hinds bringing forth young:* which agrees very little with the reſt of the imagery either in nature or dignity: nor do I feel myſelf perſuaded, even by the reaſonings of the learned Bochart on this ſubject, Hieroz. part i. lib. iii. chap. 17. Whereas the oak ſtruck with lightning admirably agrees with the context. And Bochart himſelf explains the word אילה (which has been abſurdly underſtood by the Maſorites and other commentators as relating to a ſtag) as ſpoken of a tree in a very beautiful explication of an obſcure paſſage in GEN. xlix. 21. *Author's Note.*

" Proſtrate

" Proſtrate on the ſacred floor
" Iſrael's ſons his name adore.
" While his acts to every tongue
" Yields its argument of ſong.
" He the ſwelling ſurge commands;
" Fix'd his throne for ever ſtands;
" He his people ſhall increaſe,
" Arm with ſtrength, and bleſs with peace."

LECTURE XXVIII.

THE SUBLIME STYLE OF THE HEBREW ODE.

The ſublime Ode, in which all the conſtituents of ſublimity formerly ſpecified are united.—The prophetic Ode of Moſes, DEUT. xxxii. *— The triumphal Ode of Deborah; the Prayer of Habakkuk; the Fate of Tyranny, being a poetical imitation of the* xivth *chapter of Iſaiah.*

BEFORE we conclude this diſquiſition concerning the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews, it will be proper to produce a few ſpecimens of that kind of ode, which derives ſublimity from ſeveral united cauſes, from the diction, the ſentiments, the form and conduct of the poem; and which accumulates, or in a manner condenſes and combines all the beauties and elegancies of this ſtyle of compoſition. The poems to which I ſhall refer on this occaſion, are too well known to require a minute explanation, and indeed almoſt too noble and perſpicuous in themſelves to admit of any illuſtration from criticiſm; it will therefore be ſufficient to notice them in general terms, or, at moſt,

briefly to recommend a few paſſages, which are perhaps ſo eminently beautiful as to deſerve particular attention.

The firſt inſtance I ſhall mention is that prophetic ode of Moſes [1], which contains a juſtification on the part of God againſt the Iſraelites, and an explanation of the nature and deſign of the divine judgments. The exordium is ſingularly magnificent; the plan and conduct of the poem is juſt, natural, and well accommodated to the ſubject, for it is almoſt in the order of an hiſtorical narration. It embraces a variety of the ſublimeſt ſubjects and ſentiments, it diſplays the truth and juſtice of God, his paternal love, and his unfailing tenderneſs to his choſen people; and on the other hand, their ungrateful and contumacious ſpirit. The ardour of the divine indignation, and the heavy denunciations of vengeance, are afterwards expreſſed in a remarkable perſonification, which is ſcarcely to be paralleled from all the choiceſt treaſures of the Muſes. The fervour of wrath is however tempered with the milder beams of lenity and mercy, and ends at laſt

[1] DEUT. xxxii.

in

in promiſes and conſolation. When I formerly treated of elevation of ſentiment, of the impulſe of the paſſions, of the force of imagery and diction, I could ſcarcely have avoided touching upon this poem, and drawing ſome of my examples from it [2]. Not to repeat theſe, or accumulate unneceſſary matter, I will only add one remark, namely, that the ſubject and ſtyle of this poem bear ſo exact a reſemblance to the prophetic as well as the Lyric compoſitions of the Hebrews, that it unites all the force, energy, and boldneſs of the latter, with the exquiſite variety and grandeur of imagery ſo peculiar to the former [3].

Another ſpecimen of the perfectly ſublime Ode will be found in the triumphal Ode of Deborah [4]. This Poem conſiſts of three parts: firſt, the exordium; next, a recital of the circumſtances which preceded, and of thoſe which accompanied the victory; laſtly, a fuller deſcription of the concluding event, the death of Siſera, and the diſappointed hopes of his mother, which is embelliſhed

[2] See LECT. xv.

[3] JUD. v.

[4] See LECT. xiii.

with all the choiceſt flowers of poetry. Of this latter part, I endeavoured to explain at large the principal beauties in a former lecture. About the middle of the poem, it muſt be confeſſed, ſome obſcurities occur, and thoſe not of a trivial nature, which impair the beauty of the compoſition; and what is worſe, I fear they will ſcarcely admit of elucidation, unleſs we were poſſeſſed of ſome further hiſtorical lights. The exordium deſerves a particular examination, as well for its native magnificence and ſublimity, as becauſe it will ſerve more completely to illuſtrate my remarks concerning the digreſſions of the Hebrew Ode. I obſerved, that the principal paſſages in the Sacred Hiſtory, which in general conſtitute the materials of theſe digreſſions, are ſo connected with every ſubject of Sacred Poetry, that even in the moſt excentric excurſions of the imagination, there is little danger of wandering from the main ſcope and deſign. The ſubject of this Ode is the triumph of the Iſraelites over their enemies through the divine aſſiſtance, and the eſtabliſhment of their liberty. At the very opening of the poem this is propoſed as the ground-work of it:

and

and after inviting the kings and princes of the neighbouring nations to attend to this miracle of the divine goodneſs, the author proceeds to celebrate the praiſe of God, not commencing with the benefit ſo recently received, but with the prodigies formerly exhibited in Egypt:

"O JEHOVAH, when thou wenteſt forth out of
" Seir,
" When thou proceededſt from the plains of
" Edom;
" The earth was moved, the heavens dropped,
" The clouds alſo dropped water;
" The mountains melted from before the face of
" JEHOVAH,
" Sinah itſelf from before JEHOVAH, the God of
" Iſrael."

The ſudden introduction of ſuch important incidents, breathes the free and fervid ſpirit of the Lyric Muſe. There is however no defect in the connexion, nor does any degree of obſcurity attend the compariſon which is implied between that ſtupendous deliverance and the benefit ſo lately received.

On the ſame principle the prayer of Habakkuk is conſtructed [5]; and is a remarkable

[5] HABAK. iii.

inſtance of that ſublimity peculiar to the ode, and which is often the reſult of a bold but natural digreſſion. The Prophet foreſeeing the judgment of God, and the impending calamities, which were to be inflicted upon his nation by the hands of the Chaldeans, as well as the puniſhments, which the latter were themſelves to undergo; partly ſtruck with terror, partly cheered with hope, he beſeeches Almighty God to haſten the redemption of his people:

" O JEHOVAH, I have heard thy ſpeech,
" I have feared, O JEHOVAH, thy work.
" As the years[6] approach, thou haſt ſhewn it:
" And in thy wrath haſt remembered mercy."

In this paſſage, the reſemblance between the Babyloniſh and Egyptian captivities naturally preſents itſelf to the mind, as well as the poſſibility of a ſimilar deliverance through the power and aſſiſtance of God. With how much propriety, therefore, might the Prophet have continued his ſupplications to that

[6] See the VULG. and THEODOTION, εν μεσῳ ετων· AQUILA and the LXX. εν τῳ εγγιζειν τα ετη· SYMMACHUS, εντος των ενιαυτων. All of them almoſt in the ſame ſenſe, that is, " within a fixed time."

all-powerful and all-merciful God; that, as he had formerly wrought ſo many miracles in favour of his people, he would afford them relief and conſolation on the preſent occaſion; and how efficacious a method would it have been, to confirm the fortitude of every pious perſon, to remind them, that he who had formerly manifeſted his infinite power in delivering the Iſraelites from their great afflictions, might, in proper time, employ the ſame means to reſcue them from their preſent ſtate of ſuffering? He however totally diſregards the formality of this method, probably becauſe he ſuppoſed all the above ideas would ſpontaneouſly occur to the reader; nor does he labour for acceſs by ſlow and regular approaches to the ſacred depoſitory of the moſt ſplendid materials, but burſts into it at once, and by a ſort of unexpected impulſe:

" God came from Teman,
" And the Holy One from mount Paran:
" His glory covered the heavens;
" And the earth was full of his praiſe."

The Prophet, indeed, illuſtrates this ſubject throughout with equal magnificence; ſelect-

ing from ſuch an aſſemblage of miraculous incidents, the moſt noble and important, diſplaying them in the moſt ſplendid colours, and embelliſhing them with the ſublimeſt imagery, figures, and diction, the dignity of which is ſo heightened and recommended by the ſuperior elegance of the concluſion, that were it not for a few ſhades, which the hand of time has apparently caſt over it in two or three paſſages, no compoſition of the kind would, I believe, appear more elegant or more perfect than this poem.

I will add one remarkable example more of the perfectly ſublime ode, which indeed it would be utterly unpardonable to overlook; I mean, the triumphal ſong of the Iſraelites on the deſtruction of Babylon. It is almoſt unneceſſary to add, that it is in no reſpect unworthy of Iſaiah, whom I cannot help eſteeming the firſt of poets, as well for elegance as ſublimity. Having formerly taken up a conſiderable portion of your time and attention in a minute inveſtigation of its beauties, it is now preſented in the modern form of a Lyric compoſition.

ON THE FATE OF TYRANNY, ISAIAH XIV.

" Oppreſſion dies: the Tyrant falls:
" The golden City bows her walls!
" JEHOVAH breaks th' Avenger's rod.
" The Son of Wrath, whoſe ruthleſs hand
" Hurl'd Deſolation o'er the land,
" Has run his raging race, has clos'd the ſcene of
" blood.
" Chiefs arm'd around behold their vanquiſh'd
" Lord;
" Nor ſpread the guardian ſhield, nor lift the
" loyal ſword.

" He falls; and Earth again is free.
" Hark! at the call of Liberty,
" All Nature lifts the choral ſong.
" The Fir-trees, on the mountain's head,
" Rejoice thro' all their pomp of ſhade;
" The lordly Cedars nod on ſacred Lebanon:
" Tyrant! they cry, ſince thy fell force is
" broke,
" Our proud heads pierce the ſkies, nor fear the
" woodman's ſtroke.

" Hell, from her gulph profound,
" Rouſes at thine approach; and, all around,
" Her dreadful notes of preparation ſound.
" See, at the awful call,
" Her ſhadowy Heroes all,

" Ev'n mighty Kings, the heirs of empire wide,
" Riſing, with ſolemn ſtate, and ſlow,
" From their ſable thrones below,
" Meet, and inſult thy pride.
" What, doſt thou join our ghoſtly train,
" A flitting ſhadow light, and vain?
" Where is thy pomp, thy feſtive throng,
" Thy revel dance, and wanton ſong?
" Proud King! Corruption faſtens on thy breaſt;
" And calls her crawling brood, and bids them
" ſhare the feaſt.

" Oh Luciſer! thou radiant ſtar;
" Son of the Morn; whoſe roſy car
" Flam'd foremoſt in the van of day:
" How art thou fall'n, thou King of Light!
" How fall'n from thy meridian height!
" Who ſaid'ſt the diſtant poles ſhall hear me,
" and obey.
" High, o'er the ſtars, my ſapphire throne
" ſhall glow,
" And, as JEHOVAH'S ſelf, my voice the heav'ns
" ſhall bow.

" He ſpake, he died. Diſtain'd with gore,
" Beſide yon yawning cavern hoar,
" See, where his livid corſe is laid.
" The aged Pilgrim paſſing by,
" Surveys him long with dubious eye;
" And muſes on his fate, and ſhakes his reverend
" head.

" Juſt

" Juſt heav'ns! is thus thy pride imperial
" gone?
" Is this poor heap of duſt the King of Babylon?

" Is this the Man, whoſe nod
" Made the Earth tremble: whoſe terrific rod
" Levell'd her loftieſt cities? Where He trod,
" Famine purſu'd, and frown'd;
" 'Till Nature groaning round,
" Saw her rich realms transform'd to deſerts
" dry;
" While at his crouded priſon's gate;
" Graſping the keys of Fate,
" Stood ſtern Captivity.
" Vain Man! behold thy righteous doom;
" Behold each neighb'ring monarch's tomb;
" The trophied arch, the breathing buſt,
" The laurel ſhades their ſacred duſt;
" While thou, vile Out-caſt, on this hoſtile plain,
" Moulder'ſt, a vulgar corſe, among the vulgar
" ſlain.

" No trophied arch, no breathing buſt,
" Shall dignify thy trampled duſt:
" No laurel flouriſh o'er thy grave.
" For why, proud King, thy ruthleſs hand
" Hurl'd Deſolation o'er the land,
" And cruſh'd the ſubject race, whom kings are
" born to ſave:

" Eternal

" Eternal Infamy ſhall blaſt thy name,
" And all thy ſons ſhall ſhare their impious Fa-
" ther's ſhame.

" Riſe, purple Slaughter! furious riſe;
" Unfold the terror of thine eyes;
" Dart thy vindictive ſhafts around:
" Let no ſtrange land a ſhade afford,
" No conquer'd Nations call them Lord;
" Nor let their cities riſe to curſe the goodly
" ground.
" For thus JEHOVAH ſwears; no Name, no Son,
" No remnant, ſhall remain of haughty Babylon.

" Thus ſaith the righteous Lord:
" My Vengeance ſhall unſheath the flaming ſword;
" O'er all thy realms my Fury ſhall be pour'd.
" Where yon proud city ſtood,
" I'll ſpread the ſtagnant flood;
" And there the Bittern in the ſedge ſhall lurk,
" Moaning with ſullen ſtrain:
" While, ſweeping o'er the plain,
" Deſtruction ends her work.
" Yes, on mine holy mountain's brow,
" I'll cruſh this proud Aſſyrian foe.
" Th' irrevocable word is ſpoke.
" From Judah's neck the galling yoke
" Spontaneous falls, ſhe ſhines with wonted ſtate;
" Thus by MYSELF I ſwear, and what I ſwear is
" Fate[7]."

[7] Mr. POTTER has favoured the world with a very elegant and ſpirited paraphraſe of this prophetic Ode. His deſcription

deſcription of the reception of the king of Babylon in the infernal regions is particularly ſtriking:

" To meet thee, Hades rouſes from beneath,
" An iron ſmile his viſage wears;
" He calls through all the drear abodes of death;
" His call each mighty chieftain hears;
" And ſceptered kings, of empires wide,
" Riſe from their lofty thrones, and thus accoſt thy pride.
" Is this weak form of flitting air
" The potent Lord that fill'd th' Aſſyrian throne?
" Thus are thy wonted glories gone?
" Where thy rich feaſts, thy ſprightly viols where?
" Beneath thee is corruption ſpread,
" And worms the covering of thy bed?
" How art thou fall'n, bright ſtar of orient day,
" How fall'n from thy etherial height,
" Son of the morning! Thou, whoſe ſanguine ray
" Glar'd terribly a baleful light;
" War kindled at the blaze, and wild
" Ruſh'd Slaughter, Havoc ruſh'd, their robes with blood
" defiled.
" *I in high heaven will be ador'd,*
" *Above the ſtars of God exalt my throne;*
" *My power ſhall ſacred Sion own,*
" *The mount of God's high preſence hail me Lord.*
" Such thy vain threats: Death's dark abode
" Yawns to receive the vaunting god."

The expoſtulation of the travellers, who find the body expoſed, is alſo expreſſed in terms truly magnificent:

" Is this the man, whoſe barb'rous hate
" Bound captive monarchs in his galling chain;
" While Outrage call'd his loit'ring train,
" And Rigour clos'd the dungeon's ruthleſs gate?

" How

" How from his high dominion hurl'd
" The ſpoiler of the ravag'd world!"

" Shalt thou with honour'd chiefs repoſe?
" Her jaws 'gainſt thee the Grave ſhall cloſe;
" For where portentous thy proud banners wav'd,
" Rapine ruſh'd o'er the waſted land:
" Thy country too, her free-born ſons enſlav'd,
" Or ſlaughter'd, curs'd thy hoſtile hand."

I cloſe theſe extracts with the denunciation of JEHOVAH againſt the Aſſyrians:

" Dreadful on Sion's ſacred brow
" The God of armies ſhall they know.
" Daughter of Sion, let thy joy ariſe,
" From thy griev'd neck his yoke ſhall fall;
" Virgin exult, thy haughty foe deſpiſe,
" His chain no more thy arms ſhall gall!"

LECTURE XXIX.

OF THE IDYLLIUM OF THE HEBREWS.

Beſides thoſe poems which may be ſtrictly termed odes, the general appellation, which in the Hebrew is equivalent to Canticle or Song, includes another ſpecies called by the Greeks, the Idyllium.—The reaſon of this name, and the definition of the poem to which it is appropriated.—The hiſtorical Pſalms in general belong properly to this claſs.—The intercalary ſtanza and the nature of it.—The elegant plan and arrangement of the hundred and ſeventh Pſalm explained: alſo the ixth *chapter of Iſaiah, ver.* 8. *to chap.* x. *ver.* 4.*—This paſſage a perfect ſpecimen of the Idyllium: other examples of the Idyllium no leſs perfect as to ſtyle and form.—The Hymn of Cleanthes the ſtoic commended.—The* cxxxixth *Pſalm in Engliſh verſe.*

AMONGST thoſe poems which by the Hebrews were adapted to muſic, and diſtinguiſhed by the general appellation *Shirim*, there are ſome which differ in their nature from lyric poetry, ſtrictly ſo called. It will therefore be more regular to claſs them with thoſe compoſitions anciently termed Idylliums, the name and nature of which I ſhall endeavour to explain.

Whether

Whether we are to attribute the invention of the name to the poets themſelves, or to the grammarians who reviſed their works, is difficult to ſay; but we find ſome of the Greek poems diſtinguiſhed by the title *Eidê*, which denotes a poem without any certain limitation as to form or ſubject. Even the odes of Pindar retain that appellation. But if there were any upon lighter ſubjects, or in a more humble ſtrain, indeed in any reſpect of an inferior kind, and ſuch as could not be claſſed under any of the common diviſions, they were entitled *Eidyllia*. Thus the ſmall poems of Theocritus, which conſiſt chiefly of Bucolicks, intermingled with others of different kinds, are called Idylliums. In the ſame manner the Latins preferred the name of *Eclogues*, or poems ſelected from a number of others; and for a contrary and more modeſt reaſon, that of *ſylvæ* (or *woods*) was given to ſuch verſes as were haſtily compoſed, and promiſcuouſly thrown together, ſuch as might afford matter for a more accurate reviſion or for a ſimilar ſelection. But although the term Idyllium be a vague and general term, which denotes nothing certain relating to the nature of the poem, it ſtill

appears

appears by uſe and cuſtom to have obtained a certain and appropriated deſtination; and perhaps it may not be improperly defined, a poem of moderate length; of a uniform, middle ſtyle, chiefly diſtinguiſhed for elegance and ſweetneſs; regular and clear as to plot, conduct, and arrangement. There are many perfect examples of this kind of poem extant in the writings of the Hebrews; ſome of which, I preſume, it will not be unpleaſing ſingly to point out and explain.

The firſt of theſe poems which attract our notice are the hiſtorical Pſalms, in celebration of the power and the other attributes of the Deity, as inſtanced in the miracles which he performed in favour of his people. One of the principal of theſe, bearing the name of Aſaph [1], purſues the hiſtory of the Iſraelites from the time of their departure from Egypt to the reign of David, particularizing and illuſtrating all the leading events. The ſtyle is ſimple and uniform, but the ſtructure is poetical, and the ſentiments occaſionally ſplendid. The hiſtorical, or rather chronological order, cannot be ſaid to

[1] Pſ. lxxviii.

be

to be exactly preſerved throughout; for the minute detail of ſo protracted a ſeries of events could ſcarcely fail to tire in a work of imagination. The Egyptian miracles are introduced in a very happy and elegant digreſſion, and may be conſidered as forming a kind of epiſode. The ſame ſubject affords materials for two other Pſalms, the hundred and fifth, and the hundred and ſixth: the one including the hiſtory of Iſrael, from the call of Abraham to the Exodus; the other, from that period to the later ages of the commonwealth: both of them bear a ſtrong reſemblance to the ſeventy-eighth, as well in the ſubject as in the ſtyle (except perhaps that the diction is rather of a more ſimple caſt); the mixture of eaſe and grace, diſplayed in the exordium, is the ſame in all.

Theſe Pſalms, both in plot and conduct, have a ſurprizing analogy to the Hymns of the Greeks. Indeed the Greek tranſlators might very properly have given the title of HYMNS to the book of Pſalms, as that word agrees much more exactly with the Hebrew title *Tehillim*, than that which they have adopted. This ſpecies of poetry was very

very early in uſe among the Greeks, and was almoſt entirely appropriated to the celebration of their religious rites. The ſubjects in general were the origin of the Gods, the places of their birth, their atchievements, and the other circumſtances of their hiſtory. Such are all the poems of this kind now extant in the Greek; ſuch are the elegant hymns of Calimachus, as well as thoſe which are attributed to Homer. The poem of Theocritus, entitled the DIOSKOUROI, or the praiſe of Caſtor and Pollux, is alſo a genuine hymn, and very elegant in its kind: nor is it improperly claſſed among the Idylliums, which may be ſaid to include all of this ſpecies. But the true form and character of the Hymn is excellently expreſſed by the two choirs of Salii (or prieſts of war) in Virgil:

" One choir of old, another of the young;
" To dance, and bear the burthen of the ſong;
" The lay records the labours and the praiſe,
" And all th' immortal acts of Hercules [a]."

Thoſe ancient hymns, which are falſely attributed to Orpheus, are more properly ini-

[a] DRYD. VIRG. ÆNEID. viii. 379.

tiatory Songs; for they contain "little more "than invocations of the Gods, which were "made uſe of by thoſe who were initiated "in the ſacred myſteries of any of the "Gods[3]." Ovid, who was both an elegant and a learned poet, united the excellencies of both theſe ſpecies of Hymns: for the exordium of the Hymn to Bacchus contains the invocations of that God, or in other words, announces ſolemnly his name and titles; the remainder celebrates his perfections and atchievements[4].

There is yet another Pſalm, which may be enumerated among thoſe of the hiſtorical kind, namely, the hundred and thirty-ſixth. It celebrates the praiſes of the Almighty, and proclaims his infinite power and goodneſs; beginning with the work of creation, and proceeding to the miracles of the Exodus, the principal of which are related almoſt in the hiſtorical order. The exordium commences with this well-known diſtich:

"Glorify JEHOVAH, for he is good;
"For his mercy endureth for ever:"

[3] Jos. SCALIGER. Annot. in Hym. Orph.

[4] METAMORPH. iv. 11.

which,

which, according to Ezra [5], was commonly ſung by alternate choirs. There is, however, one circumſtance remarkable attending it, which is, that the latter line of the diſtich, being added by the ſecond choir, and alſo ſubjoined to every verſe (which is a ſingular caſe) forms a perpetual Epode. Hence the whole nature and form of the intercalary verſe, or (burthen of the Song) may be collected: it expreſſes in a clear, conciſe, and ſimple manner, ſome particular ſentiment, which ſeems to include virtually the general ſubject or deſign of the poem; and it is thrown in at proper intervals, according to the nature and arrangement of it, for the ſake of impreſſing the ſubject more firmly upon the mind. That the intercalary verſe is perfectly congenial to the Idyllium, is evident from the authority of Theocritus, Bion, Moſchus, and even of Virgil. I ſhall add one or two examples from the Sacred Poetry, which will not loſe in a compariſon with the moſt perfect ſpecimens in this department of poetry, which thoſe excellent writers have bequeathed to poſterity: and

[5] EZR. iii. 10, 11.

in order to illuſtrate as well the elegance of the poem in general, as the peculiar force and beauty of the intercalary verſe, the order and conduct of the ſubject muſt be particularly explained.

The hundred and ſeventh Pſalm may undoubtedly be enumerated among the moſt elegant monuments of antiquity; and it is chiefly indebted for its elegance to the general plan and conduct of the poem. It celebrates the goodneſs and mercy of God towards mankind, as demonſtrated in the immediate aſſiſtance and comfort which he affords, in the greateſt calamities, to thoſe who devoutly implore his aid. In the firſt place, to thoſe who wander in the deſert, and who encounter the horrors of famine; next, to thoſe who are in bondage; to thoſe who are afflicted with diſeaſe; and finally, to thoſe who are toſſed about upon the ocean. The prolixity of the argument is occaſionally relieved by narration; and examples are ſuperadded of the divine ſeverity in puniſhing the wicked, as well as of his benignity to the devout and virtuous; and both the narrative and preceptive parts are recommended to the earneſt contemplation of conſiderate minds.

Thus the whole poem actually divides into five parts nearly equal; the four first of which conclude with an intercalary verse, expressive of the subject or design of the hymn:

"Glorify JEHOVAH for his mercy,
"And for his wonders to the children of men."

This distich also is occasionally diversified, and another sometimes annexed illustrative of the sentiment;

"For he satisfieth the famished soul,
"And filleth the hungry with good."

"For he hath broken the brazen gates,
"And the bolts of iron he hath cut in sunder."

The sentiment of the Epode itself is sometimes repeated, only varied by different imagery:

"Glorify JEHOVAH for his mercy,
"And for his wonders to the children of men:
"Let them also offer sacrifices of praise,
"And let them declare his works with melody."

"Let them exalt him in the assembly of the
"people,
"And in the council of the elders let them cele-
"brate him."

In all theſe paſſages, the tranſition from the contemplation of their calamities, to that of their deliverance, which is made by the perpetual repetition of the ſame diſtich, is truly elegant:

" Let them alſo cry unto JEHOVAH in their trou-
" bles;
" And from their afflictions he will deliver them:"

This however does not appear in the leaſt to partake of the nature of the intercalary verſe. The latter part of the Pſalm, which comprehends a vaſt variety of matter, concludes with two diſtichs expreſſive of a ſentiment, grave, ſolemn, and practical, and in no reſpect unworthy the reſt of the poem.

There are many other examples to be found in the Pſalms; but it muſt be confeſſed, few of them are equal, and none of them ſuperior to this. I ſhall ſelect another ſpecimen from Iſaiah; and the more willingly, becauſe, in it, as in other paſſages of the ſame author, the common diviſion into chapters has greatly obſcured that moſt elegant writer, by abſurdly breaking the unity of a very intereſting poem, and connecting each part with matter which is totally foreign

ſeign to the ſubject. If we unite the concluſion of the ninth chapter with the beginning of the tenth, we ſhall find a complete and connected prophecy againſt the kingdom of Iſrael or Samaria [6]. It is replete with terror and ſolemnity, and poſſeſſes a degree of force and ſublimity to which the Idyllium ſeldom riſes; though it preſerves the form of the Idyllium ſo perfect and expreſs, that it cannot with propriety be referred to any other claſs. The poem conſiſts of four parts, each of which contains a denunciation of vengeance againſt the crimes of this rebellious people, vehemently accuſing them of ſome atrocious offence, and diſtinctly marking out the particular puniſhment. In the firſt, the pride and oſtentation of the Iſraelites is reproved; in the ſecond, the obduracy of their ſpirit, and the general depravation of their morals; in the third, their audacious impiety, which rages like a flame, deſtroying and laying waſte the nation; and laſtly, their iniquity is ſet forth

[6] ISA. ix. 8.—x. 4. "In one MS. a vacant ſpace is "left after ISA. x. 4. but no ſpace of the ſame kind at "the end of chap. ix. In another MS. after chap. x. 4. "a ſpace of one line is interpoſed." K.

as demonſtrated in their partial administration of juſtice, and their oppreſſion of the poor. To each of theſe a ſpecific puniſhment is annexed; and a clauſe, declaratory of a further reſerve of the divine vengeance is added, which forms the Epode, and is admirably calculated to exaggerate the horror of the prediction:

"For all this his anger is not turned away;
"But his hand is ſtill ſtretched out."

The examples which I have hitherto produced will, at firſt view, explain their own nature and kind; there are, however, others, and probably not a few, (in the book of Pſalms particularly) which may equally be accounted of the Idyllium ſpecies. I have principally in contemplation thoſe, in which ſome particular ſubject is treated in a more copious and regular manner, than is uſual in compoſitions ſtrictly lyric. Such is the hundred and fourth Pſalm, which demonſtrates the glory of the infinite Creator, from the wiſdom, beauty, and variety of his works. The poet embelliſhes this noble ſubject with the cleareſt and moſt ſplendid colouring of language; and with imagery the moſt magnificent,

nificent, lively, diverſified, and pleaſing, at the ſame time ſelect, and happily adapted to the ſubject. There is nothing of the kind extant, indeed nothing can be conceived, more perfect than this Hymn, whether it be conſidered with reſpect to its intrinſic beauties, or as a model of that ſpecies of compoſition. Miraculous exertions of the divine power have ſomething in them which at firſt ſtrikes the inattentive mind with a ſtrong ſentiment of ſublimity and awe: but the true ſubject of praiſe, the moſt worthy of God, and the beſt adapted to impreſs upon the heart of man a fervent and permanent ſenſe of piety, is drawn from the contemplation of his power in the creation of this infinite All, his wiſdom in arranging and adorning it, his providence in ſuſtaining, and his mercy in the regulation of its minuteſt parts, and in ordering and directing the affairs of men. The Greek Hymns conſiſted chiefly of fables, and theſe fables regarded perſons and events, which were neither laudable in themſelves, nor greatly to be admired; indeed I do not recollect any that are extant of this ſublime nature, except that of the famous ſtoic Cleanthes,

Cleanthes, which is inſcribed to Jove, that is to God the creator, or as he expreſſes himſelf, " to the Eternal Mind, the Creator " and Governor of Nature[7]." It is doubtleſs a moſt noble monument of ancient wiſdom, and replete with truths not leſs ſolid than magnificent. For the ſentiments of the philoſopher concerning the divine power, concerning the harmony of nature, and the ſupreme laws, concerning the folly and unhappineſs of wicked men, who are unceaſingly ſubject to the pain and perturbation of a troubled ſpirit; and above all, the ardent ſupplication for the divine aſſiſtance, in order to enable him to celebrate the praiſes of the omnipotent Deity in a ſuitable manner, and in a perpetual ſtrain of praiſe and adoration; all of theſe breathe ſo true and unaffected a ſpirit of piety, that they ſeem in ſome meaſure to approach the excellence of the Sacred Poetry.

The Hymn of David, which I have juſt mentioned, deſervedly occupies the firſt place in this claſs of poems; that which comes

[7] See CUDWORTH, *Intellect. Syſtem.* pag. 432. or H. STEPHAN, *Poeſim Philoſoph.*

neareſt

neareſt to it, as well in the conduct of the poem as in the beauty of the ſtyle, is another of the ſame author. It celebrates the omniſcience of the Deity, and the incomparable art and deſign diſplayed in the formation of the human body; if it be excelled (as perhaps it is) by the former in the plan, diſpoſition, and arrangement of the matter, it is however not in the leaſt inferior in the dignity and elegance of the figures and imagery:

PSALM CXXXIX.

" Thou, Lord, haſt ſearch'd me out, thine eyes
" Mark when I ſit, and when I riſe;
" By thee my future thoughts are read;
" Thou round my path, and round my bed,
" Attendeſt vigilant; each word,
" Ere yet I ſpeak, by thee is heard.
" Life's maze, before my view outſpread,
" Within thy preſence rapt I tread,
" And touch'd with conſcious horror ſtand
" Beneath the ſhadow of thy hand.
" How deep thy knowledge, Lord, how wide!
" Long to the fruitleſs taſk applied,
" That mighty ſea my thoughts explore,
" Nor reach its depth, nor find its ſhore.

" Where

" Where ſhall I ſhun thy wakeful eye,
" Or whither from thy ſpirit fly?
" Aloft to heaven my courſe I bear;
" In vain; for thou, my God, art there:
" If prone to hell my feet deſcend,
" Thou ſtill my footſteps ſhalt attend:
" If now, on ſwifteſt wings upborne,
" I ſeek the regions of the morn,
" Or haſte me to the weſtern ſteep,
" Where eve ſits brooding o'er the deep;
" Thy hand the fugitive ſhall ſtay,
" And dictate to my ſteps their way.
" Perchance within its thickeſt veil
" The darkneſs ſhall my head conceal:
" But, inſtant, thou haſt chas'd away
" The gloom, and round me pour'd the day,
" Darkneſs, great God! to thee there's none;
" Darkneſs and light to thee are one;
" Nor brighter ſhines, to thee diſplay'd,
" The noon, than night's obſcureſt ſhade.
" My reins, my fabrick's ev'ry part,
" The wonders of thy plaſtic art
" Proclaim, and prompt my willing tongue
" To meditate the grateful ſong:
" With deepeſt awe my thoughts their frame
" Surveys—" I tremble that I am."
" While yet a ſtranger to the day
" Within the burthen'd womb I lay,
" My bones, familiar to thy view,
" By juſt degrees to firmneſs grew:

" Day

" Day to ſucceeding day conſign'd
" Th' unfiniſh'd birth; thy mighty mind
" Each limb, each nerve, e'er yet they were,
" Contemplated, diſtinct, and clear;
" Thoſe nerves thy curious finger ſpun,
" Thoſe limbs it faſhion'd one by one;
" And, as thy pen in fair deſign
" Trac'd on thy book each ſhadowy line,
" Thy handmaid Nature read them there,
" And made the growing work her care;
" Conform'd it to th' unerring plan,
" And gradual wrought me into man.
" With what delight, great God, I trace
" The acts of thy ſtupendous grace!
" To count them, were to count the ſand
" That lies upon the ſea-beat ſtrand.
" When from my temples ſleep retires,
" To thee my thankful heart aſpires,
" And with thy ſacred preſence bleſt,
" Joys to receive the awful gueſt.
" Shall impious men thy will withſtand,
" Nor feel the vengeance of thy hand?
" Hence, murth'rers, hence, nor near me ſtay;
" Ye ſons of Violence, away!
" When lawleſs crouds, with inſult vain,
" Thy works revile, thy name profane,
" Can I unmov'd thoſe inſults ſee,
" Nor hate the wretch that hateth thee?
" Indignant, in thy cauſe I join,
" And all thy foes, my God, are mine.

" Searcher

" Searcher of hearts, my thoughts review;
" With kind ſeverity purſue
" Through each diſguiſe thy ſervant's mind,
" Nor leave one ſtain of guilt behind.
" Guide through th' eternal path my feet,
" And bring me to thy bliſsful ſeat."

LECTURE XXX.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON NOT A REGULAR DRAMA.

The Platonic diviſion of Poetry into the narrative, dramatic, and mixed kinds, of little uſe; but deſerves to be noticed on this occaſion, as leading to an accurate definition of Dramatic Poetry, and clearing up the ambiguity in which the term has been involved by the moderns.—Two ſpecies pointed out: the leſſer, which poſſeſſes only the form of dialogue, without the perſonal intervention of the Poet; and the greater, which contains a plot or fable.—There are extant ſome inſtances of the former in the writings of the Hebrews; but none of their productions ſeem to have the leaſt title to the latter character, two perhaps excepted; the Song of Solomon, and the Book of Job.—Inquiry, whether the Song of Solomon contain a complete plot or fable.—It is an Epithalamium: the characters which are repreſented in it: the Poem founded upon the nuptial rites of the Hebrews.—The opinion of Boſſuet cited and explained; namely, that this Poem is a repreſentation of the ſeven days of feſtival which ſucceeded the marriage, and conſequently conſiſts of ſeven parts or diviſions.—This opinion the moſt favourable of all, to thoſe who account this Poem a regular Drama: it however does not prove, that it contains a complete plot or fable.—Definition of a Dramatic Fable.—Nothing like it in the Song of Solomon: it is therefore not a perfect Drama, but is of the leſſer claſs

of

of Dramatic Poems. — The chorus of Virgin bears a great analogy to the chorus of the Greek Tragedies; but could not ſerve as a model for them.

THE ancient critics following the authority of Plato [1], have diſtributed all poetical compoſitions, according to their form or ſubject, into three claſſes, the narrative, the imitative or dramatic, and the mixed. This arrangement is, however, not of much uſe on the whole; it neither draws a perfect line of diſtinction between the different ſpecies of poems, nor ſerves to define or explain the nature and form of any. There is ſcarcely any ſpecies of poem perfectly ſimple in its nature, ſcarcely any which does not occaſionally unite theſe different modes of expreſſion. The Epic indeed may be ſaid to exhibit almoſt invariably a narration of the mixed kind; and the Dramatic neceſſarily aſſumes the imitative form. But as other poems may adopt freely the mixed narration; ſo I do not ſee any juſt reaſon why they ſhould be abſolutely prohibited from aſſuming the Dramatic form. Cuſtom, however, we find has ſo far prevailed, that

[1] See PLAT. De Rep. lib. iii.

although

although the ſtyle and manner does not ſeem neceſſarily appropriated to any particular ſubject whatever, the name at leaſt of Dramatic has been generally received as diſtinguiſhing a particular ſpecies of poetry. The preſent object of inquiry is, therefore, what ſpecimens of this ſpecies of compoſition are extant in the writings of the Hebrews: and in the very firſt ſtage of our inveſtigation, ſome degree of caution will be required, leſt the ambiguity of the term, as it has been uſed by the moderns, ſhould miſlead or perplex us.

The term Dramatic Poetry, as I before obſerved, is now reſtricted to two particular ſpecies of compoſition, Tragedy and Comedy. It was originally, however, of much more extenſive ſignification; it regarded ſimply the external form; it was properly applied to every poem compoſed in dialogue, provided that, throughout the whole, the converſation was carried on by the characters themſelves, without the intervention of the Poet [a]. This mode of compoſition is exemplified

[a] The nature of this appropriation of a general term will perhaps be better explained, by briefly adverting to the

emplified in ſeveral of the Bucolics of Theocritus and Virgil, in ſome of the Satires of Horace, and in two of his Odes. In order, therefore, to examine the ſubject more accurately, it will be proper to diſtinguiſh two ſpecies of Dramatic Poems; the leſſer, in which, by means of dialogue or characters,

Hiſtory of the Theatre. In fact, there is ſcarcely any circumſtance in which the gradual progreſs of human invention is more exemplified, than in the origin and improvement of the Greek Drama. It was originally nothing more than a rude Song, exhibited by one or more clowniſh minſtrels or ballad-ſingers, who diſfigured themſelves to excite attention. *Theſpis* collected a company of them together, and tranſported them from village to village in a kind of waggon; and ſomething like this ſtate of the Drama we ſee in the rude exhibitions of *Mummers* and *Morrice-dancers* in the inland parts of this kingdom. Theſpis added to the ſingers an interlocutor, who ſerved to explain the matter of the ſongs; and in this ſtate the Drama continued, till an accident brought it to greater perfection. In the repreſentation of a Tragedy, in which the Furies were exhibited, the barbarous dreſſes of the chorus (which conſiſted of fifty perſons) frighted the pregnant women into fits. Hence Æſchylus was induced to retrench the number of the chorus, and to make up for the deficiency, added to the actors or interlocutors. He erected a ſtage, and ornamented it with machinery; and equipped the actors with the robe, the buſkin and the maſk. See more upon this ſubject in *Eſſays Hiſtorical and Moral*, by the Tranſlator of theſe Lectures. Eſſ. i. T.

the

the manners, paſſions, and actions of men, are imitated or delineated; and the greater, which contains, moreover, a plot or fable, that is, the repreſentation of ſome incident or tranſaction of life, regular or complete, in which events ſucceed each other in a connected ſeries, and which after various and intereſting viciſſitudes is wrought up to a perfect concluſion. This latter ſpecies includes both Tragedy and Comedy; and as the plot or fable diſtinguiſhes them from the inferior ſpecies of Dramatic Poetry, ſo the perfect form of dialogue ſerves to draw the line between them and the Epic.

There are abundant examples of the former ſpecies of Dramatic Poetry manifeſtly extant in the writings of the Hebrews; and perhaps there are many others, which we have not diſcovered to be of this kind [3]. The ſudden

[3] Our author has treated with his uſual modeſty a very difficult ſubject: on which, thoſe who have been more adventurous have been led into great errors. It is certain that many of the Pſalms are dramatic, which ſome commentators obſerving, delighted with their own diſcoveries, whenever they met with a paſſage more difficult than uſual, or were able to catch any new and viſionary explanation, more agreeable to their theological notions,

ſudden change of perſons, when by the vehemence of paſſion the author is led, as it were

they have eagerly reſorted to the change of the perſons or characters, though no ſuch change exiſted. Such are thoſe commentators who have fancied, in accommodation to the quotation of St. Paul, Heb. i. 10. the ſpirit and purpoſe of which they did not underſtand, that the former part of the ciid Psalm to the 24th verſe: "Take "me not away in the midſt of my age," conſiſted entirely of a ſpeech of Chriſt, and that the remainder; "as "for thy years, they endure throughout all generations," &c. was the reply of God the Father. Whoever indulges himſelf in this mode of explication, may eaſily find out any thing he pleaſes in the Pſalms, and with little or no philological knowledge, without the ſmalleſt aſſiſtance from criticiſm, can give a meaning even to the moſt difficult or corrupted texts of Scripture: any meaning indeed but the right one.

Our author very juſtly ſuſpects, that not a few paſſages of the dramatic kind are at preſent unknown: yet we are not allowed to ſuppoſe an ode of the dramatic kind, unleſs it appear ſo by ſome deciſive proof; nor ought we to fly to this diſcovery as a refuge for our ignorance. For, as many paſſages may probably be of the dramatic kind which we do not know to be ſuch, ſo, many may be accounted dramatic, which a little more philological knowledge, or the true reading, which antiquity may have obſcured, would point out to be ſimple and regular compoſitions. In order to demonſtrate how cautious commentators ought to be in theſe reſpects, I ſhall have recourſe to one example, whence we ſhall be able to judge how uncertain

were inſenſibly, from the narration of an event to the imitation or acting of it, is frequent in the Hebrew poetry; but ſometimes the genuine Dramatic, or Dialogue form, is quite apparent, and the paſſage will admit of no other explanation. The twenty-fourth Pſalm is evidently of this kind, relating, as I formerly endeavoured to prove, to the transferring of the ark to Mount

uncertain many others are, however they may bear a face of probability.

The ſecond PSALM has been accounted one of the principal of the dramatic kind, and ſcarcely any perſon has doubted of its being altogether dramatic. If you attend to ſome commentators, the holy Prophet ſpeaks in the 1ſt and 2d verſes; in the 3d the rebellious princes; in the 4th and 5th the Prophet again; in the 6th God; in the 7th and 8th the anointed King; in the 10th, 11th, and 12th, the holy Prophet. It is very extraordinary that they ſhould not ſee, that it is not the rebellious princes who ſpeak in the 3d verſe, but that their words are only referred to by the Prophet, and that, according to the manner of the Orientals, without directly identifying the ſpeaker. Nothing is more common in the Arabic poetry, than to relate the actions and ſentiments of particular perſons, and to annex their very words without any preface, of *ſaying*, or *he ſaid*, &c. It does not even appear that God is introduced as a dramatic character, for if ſo, what is the uſe of the words—"He ſhall ſpeak unto them "in his wrath," &c.? M.

Sion; and the whole of the tranſaction is exhibited in a theatrical manner, though the dialogue is not fully obvious till towards the concluſion of the poem. That remarkable paſſage of Iſaiah alſo, deſerves notice on this occaſion, in which the Meſſiah, coming to vengeance, is introduced converſing with a chorus as on a theatre:

CHO. "Who is this, that cometh from Edom?
"With garments deeply dyed from Botſra?
"This, that is magnificent in his apparel;
"Marching on in the greatneſs of his ſtrength?

MES. "I, who publiſh righteouſneſs, and am
"mighty to ſave.

CHO. "Wherefore is thine apparel red?
"And thy garments, as of one that tread-
"eth the wine-vat:

MES. "I have trodden the vat alone;
"And of the peoples there was not a man
"with me.
"And I trod them in mine anger;
"And I trampled them in mine indigna-
"tion:
"And their life-blood was ſprinkled upon
"my garments;
"And I have ſtained all mine apparel.
"For the day of vengeance was in my
"heart;
"And the year of my redeemed was come.

"And

" And I looked, and there was no one to
" help;
" And I was aſtoniſhed, that there was no
" one to uphold:
" Therefore mine own arm wrought ſalva-
" tion for me,
" And mine indignation itſelf ſuſtained
" me.
" And I trod down the peoples in mine
" anger;
" And I cruſhed them in mine indigna-
" tion;
" And I ſpilled their life-blood on the
" ground[4]."

[4] ISA. lxiii 1—6. " Ver. 1. after אני in one MS. in " the margin יהוה is added. It is read המדבר, in one MS. " with the demonſtrative article annexed. Alſo צדקה, " without ב prefixed in one MS. ſo the LXX. and the " VULG. It is read ורב, with ו prefixed in thirty-one " MSS. ſo the LXX. SYR. VULG.

" Ver. 2. It is אדום in twenty-eight MSS. and three " edit. ללבושיך, plural in twenty-one MSS. ſo the LXX. " SYR. for the firſt ל, read מ, according to all the old " tranſlations.

" Ver. 3. It is read אדרכם, without ו prefixed, in two " MSS. ſo SYR. VULG. For אבאלתי in one MS. אבאלהו.

" Ver. 4. שנת, without ו prefixed, in thirty MSS. " and three edit. So VULG.

" Ver. 5. For וחמתי ſeven MSS. and three edit. " have וצדקתי. See chap. lix. 16.

" Ver. 6. For ואשברם read ואשברם as occurs in " twenty-five MSS. and one edit." K.

The hundred and twenty-firſt Pſalm is of the ſame kind; and as it is both conciſe and elegant, I ſhall quote it at large. The king, apparently going forth to battle, firſt approaches the ark of God upon Mount Sion, and humbly implores the Divine aſſiſtance, on which alone he profeſſes to reſt his confidence:

" I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains,
" Whence cometh my ſuccour.
" My ſuccour is from JEHOVAH,
" Who made the heavens and the earth."

The High-prieſt anſwers him from the Tabernacle:

" He will not ſuffer thy foot to ſtumble;
" He that preſerveth thee will not ſlumber;
" Behold, he will neither ſlumber nor ſleep;
" He who preſerveth Iſrael.
" JEHOVAH will preſerve thee;
" JEHOVAH will ſhade thee with his right hand.
" The ſun ſhall not injure thee by day,
" Nor the moon by night.
" JEHOVAH will preſerve thee from all evil;
" He will preſerve thy ſoul.
" JEHOVAH will preſerve thy going out and thy
" coming in,
" From this time forth for ever and ever."

Thus

Thus much will ſuffice for that inferior ſpecies of Dramatic Poetry, or rather that Dramatic form which may be aſſumed by any ſpecies of poem. The more perfect and regular Drama, that I mean which conſiſts of a plot or fable, will demand a more elaborate inveſtigation.

There are only two poems extant among the writings of the Hebrews which can, on the preſent occaſion, at all be brought into queſtion, the Song of Solomon, and the book of Job; both eminent in the higheſt degree for elegance, ſublimity, and I am ſorry to add obſcurity alſo. The almoſt infinite labours of the learned have left us but little new to ſay upon this ſubject; I ſhall, however, proceed to inquire, with ſome degree of minuteneſs, into the form and ſtructure of each of theſe poems, and into the reaſons which may be alledged in favour of their claim to the appellation of regular Dramas. The opinions of other critics ſhall not paſs unregarded, if any remarks or even conjectures occur, which may be likely to throw any light upon the preſent ſubject, or to explain or illuſtrate their principal beauties.

The

The Song of Songs (for ſo it is entitled either on account of the excellence of the ſubject, or of the compoſition) is an Epithalamium, or Nuptial Dialogue; or rather, if we may be allowed to give it a title more agreeable to the genius of the Hebrew, a *Song of Loves*[5]. It is expreſſive of the utmoſt fervour as well as the utmoſt delicacy of paſſion, it is inſtinct with all the ſpirit and all the ſweetneſs of affection. The principal characters are Solomon himſelf and his bride, who are repreſented ſpeaking both in dialogue, and in ſoliloquy when accidentally ſeparated. Virgins alſo, the companions of the bride, are introduced, who ſeem to be conſtantly upon the ſtage, and bear a part in the dialogue: mention too is made of young men, friends of the bridegroom, but they are mute perſons[6]. This is exactly conformable to the manners of the Hebrews, who had always a number of companions to the bridegroom, thirty of whom were preſent in honour of Sampſon, at his nuptial feaſt[7]. In the New Teſtament, accord-

[5] Such is the title of Psalm xlv.

[6] Cant. v. 1. viii. 13. See iii. 7—11.

[7] Jud. xiv. 11.

ing

ing to the Hebrew idiom, they are called, "children (or ſons) of the bride-chamber [8]," and "friends of the bridegroom [9];" there too we find mention of ten virgins, who went forth to meet the bridegroom, and conduct him home [10]: which circumſtances, I think, indicate that this poem is founded upon the nuptial rites of the Hebrews, and is expreſſive of the forms or ceremonial of their marriages. In this opinion, indeed, the harmony [12] of commentators is not leſs remarkable,

[8] JOHN iii. 29. [9] MATT. ix. 15.

[10] LIGHTFOOT on MATT. ibid.

[11] Ps. xlv. 15.

[12] It may ſeem a bold undertaking, to contradict the opinion of all the commentators which has been ſo long eſtabliſhed, that the principal perſonages of the Canticles are a bride and bridegroom during the nuptial week. As I cannot, however, reconcile the matter to my mind, I ſhall briefly aſſign the reaſons of my diſſent from this opinion. The firſt is, that no direct mention is made, during the courſe of this long poem, of the ceremony of marriage; nor of any one of the circumſtances which attend that ceremony. Again, who can poſſibly imagine a bridegroom ſo neceſſitated to labour, as not to be able to appropriate a few days in his nuptial week, to the celebration of his marriage; but be compelled immediately to quit his ſpouſe and his friends for whole days, in order to attend his cattle in the paſtures? Nay, at this time of feſtival,

remarkable, than their diſagreement concerning the general economy and conduct of the work, and the order and arrangement of the ſeveral parts. The preſent object of inquiry, however, is only whether any plot or fable

feſtival, he even does not return at night, but leaves his bride, to whom he appears ſo much attached, alone and unhappy. Or if ſuch inſtances might occur in particular caſes, certainly they do not afford a proper ſubject for a nuptial ſong. At the ſame time, the bridegroom is ſuppoſed to have the care of a vineyard, and his brothers are diſpleaſed with him for having neglected it; this is ſo contrary to every idea of nuptial feſtivity, that unleſs we could ſuppoſe it meant in the way of burleſque, it is impoſſible to conceive it to have any relation to the celebration of a marriage.

There is ſtill leſs reaſon to think, that the poem relates to the ſtate of the parties betrothed before marriage; and there are not the ſmalleſt grounds for ſuppoſing it the deſcription of any clandeſtine amour, ſince the tranſaction is deſcribed as public and legal, and the conſent of parents is very plainly intimated.

It remains therefore to explain my own ſentiments, and theſe are, that the chaſte paſſions of conjugal and domeſtic life are deſcribed in this poem, and that it has no relation to the celebration of nuptials. It may ſeem improbable to ſome readers, that conjugal and domeſtic life ſhould afford a ſubject for an amorous poem; but thoſe readers have not reflected how materially the manners of the Orientals are different from ours. Domeſtic life among

us

fable be contained or repreſented in this poem; and upon this point, the moſt probable opinion is that of the celebrated Boſſuet [13], a critic, whoſe profound learning will ever be acknowledged, and a ſcholar whoſe exquiſite taſte will ever be admired. I ſhall endeavour, as briefly as poſſible, to explain his ſentiments concerning the form and conduct of this poem, whence we ſhall probably be enabled to decide in ſome meaſure concerning the equity of its claim to the title of a regular Drama.

It is agreed on all parts, that the nuptial feaſt, as well as every other ſolemn rite among the Hebrews, was hebdomadal [14]. Of this circumſtance M. Boſſuet has availed himſelf in the analyſation of the poem, and he accordingly divides the whole into ſeven

us is, in general, a calm and ſettled ſtate, void of difficulties, perplexities, ſuſpicions, and intrigues; and a ſtate like this rarely affords matter for ſuch a poem. But in the Eaſt, from the nature of *polygamy*, that ſtate admits more of the perplexities, jealouſies, plots, and artifices of love; the ſcene is more varied, there is more of novelty, and conſequently greater ſcope for invention and fancy. M.

[13] See BOSSUET. Præf. & Comment. in CANT.

[14] See GEN. xxix. 27. JUD. xiv. 12.

parts, corresponding to the seven days of its supposed duration [15]. The vicissitudes of day and night are marked with some degree of distinctness; he therefore makes use of these as indexes, to point to the true division of the parts. The nuptial banquet being concluded, the bride is led in the evening to her future husband; and here commences the nuptial week; for the Hebrews, in their account of time, begin always at the evening [16]. The bridegroom, who is represented in the character of a shepherd, goes forth early in the morning to the accustomed occupations of a rural and pastoral life; the bride presently awaking, and impatient of his absence, breaks out into a soliloquy full of tenderness and anxiety, and this incident

[15] In addition to what I remarked above, there is this circumstance, which militates against the conjecture of Bossuet, namely, that, though the nuptial banquet continues for seven days, no time appears in this poem appropriated to the banquet itself. Either the bride and bridegroom are separated from, and in quest of each other, or they are enjoying a wished-for solitude; and whenever they converse with the Virgins, it is in the street or in the field, and never with the guests, or at a banquet. M.

[16] See Gen. i. 5, &c.

forms

forms the exordium of the poem. The early departure of the bridegroom ſeems to be according to cuſtom; hence that precaution ſo frequently and ſo anxiouſly repeated not to diſturb his beloved:

" I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jeruſalem,
" By the roes and the hinds of the field,
" That ye diſturb not, neither awake
" This beloved, 'till herſelf be inclined [17]."

Nor leſs frequent is the following exclamation of the Virgins:

" Who is ſhe, riſing up out of the deſert!
" Who is ſhe, that is ſeen like the morning [18]!"

In theſe terms they ſeem to greet the bride when ſhe firſt comes out of her chamber: and theſe ſeveral expreſſions have ſome alluſion to the early time of the morning. The night is alſo ſometimes mentioned in direct terms [19], and ſometimes it is indirectly denoted by circumſtances [20]. If therefore any reader, admitting theſe indications of time,

[17] Chap. ii. 7. iii. 5. viii. 4.

[18] Chap. iii. 6. viii. 5. vi. 10.

[19] Chap. iii. 1. v. 2. [20] Chap. ii. 6. viii. 3.

will

will carefully attend to them, he cannot, I think, but perceive, that the whole of the work conſiſts of ſeven parts or diviſions, each of which occupies the ſpace of a day [21]. The ſame critic adds, that he can diſcover the laſt day to be clearly diſtinguiſhed as the ſabbath; for the bridegroom does not then, as uſual, go forth to his rural employments, but proceeds from the marriage-chamber into public with his bride [22]. Such are the ſentiments of this learned perſon; to which I am inclined to accede, not as abſolute demonſtration, but as a very ingenious and probable conjecture upon an extremely obſcure ſubject: I follow them therefore as a glimmering of light, which beams forth in the midſt of darkneſs, where it would be al-

[21] The following is the diſtribution of the work according to BOSSUET:

1ſt Day:	Chap. i.	——	ii.	6.
2d —:	Chap. ii.	7, ——		17.
3d —:	Chap. iii.	——	v.	1.
4th —:	Chap. v.	2, ——	vi.	9.
5th —:	Chap. vi.	10, ——	vii.	11.
6th —:	Chap. vii.	12, ——	viii.	3.
7th —:	Chap. viii.	4, ——		14.

[22] Chap. viii. 5.

moſt

moſt unreaſonable to hope for any clearer illumination.

This opinion is the moſt favourable of all to thoſe who account the Song of Solomon a regular Drama; for this arrangement ſeems to diſplay, in ſome meaſure, the order and method of a theatrical repreſentation. But if they make uſe of the term Dramatic according to the common acceptation of the word, this poem muſt be ſuppoſed to contain a fable, or entire and perfect plot or action, of a moderate extent, in which the incidents are all connected, and proceed regularly from one another, and which, after ſeveral viciſſitudes, is brought to a perfect concluſion. But certainly the bare repreſentation of a nuptial feſtival cannot in any reſpect anſwer to this definition. We are, it is true, very imperfectly inſtructed in the particular rites and ceremonies of the Hebrew marriages; but we have no reaſon to ſuppoſe, that in their common and uſual form they were poſſeſſed of ſuch variety and viciſſitude of fortunes and events, as to afford materials for a regular plot or fable. The whole was one even tenour of joy and feſtivity. An unexpected incident might in-

deed ſometimes occur to interrupt the uſual order, and to produce ſuch a change of fortune, as might afford a baſis for a Dramatic ſtory; and if any ſuch incident is to be found in the poem at preſent under our conſideration, it will eſtabliſh its claim to that appellation. But the truth is, the keeneſt inſpection of criticiſm can, throughout the whole, diſcover no ſuch incident or circumſtance; the ſtate of affairs is uniformly the ſame from the beginning to the end; a few light fluctuations of paſſion excepted, ſuch as the anxiety of abſence, and the amenity and happineſs which the lovers enjoy in each others preſence. The bride laments the abſence of her beloved [23]; ſhe ſeeks, ſhe finds him, ſhe brings him home; again he is loſt, ſhe ſeeks him again, but with different ſucceſs; ſhe complains, languiſhes, indites meſſages to be delivered to him, ſhe indulges her paſſion in a full and animated deſcription of his perſon. All this, however, bears no reſemblance, to a regular plot, nor affords the piece any fairer title to the appellation of a perfect Drama, than the Dramatic Eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil, in which the loves,

[23] Chap. iii. and v.

the

the amuſements, and the emulations of ſhepherds are depicted, and which no critic has ever claſſed with the regular fables of Euripides and Terence. Thus far therefore we may ſafely admit, that the Song of Solomon poſſeſſes indeed the Dramatic form, and therefore belongs properly to that inferior ſpecies, which was mentioned in the former part of this Lecture; but that it cannot, upon any fair grounds of reaſon, be accounted a regular Drama.

There is however one circumſtance in which this poem bears a very near affinity to the Greek Drama: the chorus of Virgins ſeems in every reſpect congenial to the tragic chorus of the Greeks. They are conſtantly preſent, and prepared to fulfil all the duties of advice and conſolation: they converſe frequently with the principal characters; they are queſtioned by them, and they return anſwers to their inquiries; they take part in the whole buſineſs of the poem, and I do not find that upon any occaſion they quit the ſcene. Some of the learned have conjectured, that Theocritus, who was contemporary with the ſeventy Greek tranſlators of the Scriptures, and lived with them in the

court of Ptolemy Philadelphus, was not unacquainted with the beauties of this poem, and that he has almoſt literally introduced ſome paſſages from it into his elegant Idyl-liums [24]. It might alſo be ſuſpected, that the Greek tragedians were indebted for their chorus to this poem of Solomon, were not the probabilities on the other ſide much greater, that the Greeks were made acquainted with it at too late a period; and were it not evident, that the chorus of the Greeks had a very different origin, were it not evident indeed that the chorus was not added to the fable, but the fable to the chorus [25].

[24] Compare Cant. i. 9. vi. 10. with Theoc. xviii. 30, 26. Cant. iv. 11. with Theoc. xx. 26. Cant. viii. 6, 7. with Theoc. xxiii. 23—26.

[25] See Note (2) on this Lecture. The uſes that certain apologiſts for the Greek Drama have found for the chorus, namely, that it heightens the probability, and corrects the ill effects of vicious ſentiments in the mouths of the actors, I do not allow. How far the muſical part of the chorus might ſerve to increaſe the pleaſure, or to excite or enliven the paſſions, is a different queſtion. T.

LEC-

LECTURE XXXI.

OF THE SUBJECT AND STYLE OF SOLOMON'S SONG.

The queſtion debated, whether the Song of Solomon is to be taken in a literal or allegorical ſenſe: the allegorical ſenſe defended upon the grounds of the Parabolic ſtyle.—The nature and ground-work of this allegory explained.—The faſtidiouſneſs of thoſe critics reproved, who pretend to take offence at the freedom of ſome of thoſe images which are found in the Sacred Writings; the nature of thoſe images explained.—The allegorical interpretation confirmed by analogical arguments: not equally demonſtrable from the internal ſtructure of the work itſelf.—This allegory of the third or myſtical ſpecies; the ſubject literally relating to the nuptials of Solomon.—Two cautions to be obſerved by commentators.—The ſtyle of the Poem paſtoral: the characters are repreſented as paſtoral; how agreeable this to the manners of the Hebrews.—The elegance of the topics, deſcriptions, compariſons of this Poem: illuſtrated by examples.

HAVING, in my laſt Lecture, briefly explained what appeared to me moſt probable, among the great variety of opinions which have prevailed, concerning the conduct and economy of the Song of Solomon, a queſtion next preſents itſelf for our inveſtigation, not leſs involved in doubt and ob-

ſcurity, I mean the real nature and ſubject of the poem. Some are of opinion, that it is to be taken altogether in a literal ſenſe, and others eſteem it wholly allegorical. There is no leſs diſagreement alſo among thoſe who conſider it as allegorical; ſome conceive it to be no more than a ſimple allegory, while others place it in that claſs which I have denominated myſtical, that, namely, which is founded upon the baſis of hiſtory. I would gladly, from the firſt, have conſidered this queſtion as foreign to my undertaking, and would have avoided it as involved in the deepeſt obſcurity, had I not, in the former part of theſe Lectures, been under the neceſſity of remarking the connexion between the different kinds of allegory and the principles of the Sacred Poetry; had I not alſo found it neceſſary to advert to all the peculiarities of the parabolic ſtyle, the moſt obvious property of which is to expreſs by certain images, chiefly adopted from natural objects, the analogy and application of which is regularly preſerved, thoſe ideas and doctrines which are more remote from common apprehenſion. This I cannot help conſidering as a matter of the utmoſt importance, in ena-

bling us to underſtand properly the poetry of the Hebrews; and upon this point much of the preſent argument will be found to depend.

I ſhall on this, as well as upon the laſt occaſion, proceed with that cautious reſerve which I think prudent and neceſſary on ſo obſcure a ſubject; and ſince certainty is not to be obtained, I ſhall content myſelf with propoſing to your conſideration what appears leaſt improbable. In the firſt place then I confeſs, that by ſeveral reaſons, by the general authority and conſent of both the Jewiſh and Chriſtian churches; and ſtill more, by the nature and analogy of the parabolic ſtyle, I feel irreſiſtibly inclined to that ſide of the queſtion which conſiders this poem as an entire allegory. Thoſe, indeed, who have conſidered it in a different light, and who have objected againſt the inconſiſtency and meanneſs of the imagery, ſeem to be but little acquainted with the genius of the parabolic diction; for the removal, therefore, of theſe difficulties, which I find have been the cauſe of offence to many perſons, I ſhall beg leave to treſpaſs upon your attention, while I explain ſomewhat more

accurately the nature of this allegory, and its analogy with other productions of the Hebrew poets.

The narrowneſs and imbecillity of the human mind being ſuch, as ſcarcely to comprehend or attain a clear idea of any part of the Divine nature by its utmoſt exertions; God has condeſcended, in a manner, to contract the infinity of his glory, and to exhibit it to our underſtandings under ſuch imagery as our feeble optics are capable of contemplating. Thus the Almighty may be ſaid to deſcend, as it were, in the Holy Scriptures, from the height of his majeſty, to appear on earth in a human ſhape, with human ſenſes and affections, in all reſpects reſembling a mortal—"with human voice and "human form." This kind of allegory is called anthropopathy, and occupies a conſiderable portion of theology, properly ſo called, that is, as delivered in the Holy Scriptures. The principal part of this imagery is derived from the paſſions; nor indeed is there any one affection or emotion of the human ſoul which is not, with all its circumſtances, aſcribed in direct terms, without any qualification whatever, to the ſupreme

preme God; not excepting thoſe in which human frailty and imperfection is moſt evidently diſplayed, anger and grief, hatred and revenge. That love alſo, and that of the tendereſt kind, ſhould bear a part in this Drama, is highly natural and perfectly conſiſtent. Thus, not only the fondneſs of paternal affection is attributed to God, but alſo the force, the ardour, and the ſolicitude of conjugal attachment, with all the concomitant emotions, the anxiety, the tenderneſs, the jealouſy incidental to this paſſion.

After all, this figure is not in the leaſt productive of obſcurity; the nature of it is better underſtood than that of moſt others; and although it be exhibited in a variety of lights, it conſtantly preſerves its native perſpicuity. A peculiar people, of the poſterity of Abraham, was ſelected by God from among the nations, and he ratified his choice by a ſolemn covenant. This covenant was founded upon reciprocal conditions; on the one part love, protection, and ſupport; on the other faith, obedience, and worſhip pure and devout. This is that conjugal union between God and his church; that ſolemn compact ſo frequently celebrated by almoſt all the

the ſacred writers under this image. It is indeed a remarkable inſtance of that ſpecies of metaphor which Ariſtotle calls analogical [1]; that is, when in a propoſition conſiſting of four ideas, the firſt bears the ſame relation to the ſecond as the third does to the fourth, and the correſponding words may occaſionally change their places without any injury to the ſenſe. Thus in this form of expreſſion God is ſuppoſed to bear exactly the ſame relation to the church as a huſband to a wife; God is repreſented as the ſpouſe of the church, and the church as the betrothed of God. Thus alſo, when the ſame figure is maintained with a different mode of expreſſion, and connected with different circumſtances, the relation is ſtill the ſame: thus the piety of the people, their impiety, their idolatry, and rejection, ſtand in the ſame relation with reſpect to the ſacred covenant; as chaſtity, modeſty, immodeſty, adultery, divorce, with reſpect to the marriage contract. And this notion is ſo very familiar and well underſtood in Scripture, that the word adultery (or whoredom) is com-

[1] POET. chap. xxii. and RHET. iii. 3.

monly

monly uſed to denote idolatrous worſhip, and ſo appropriated does it appear to this metaphorical purpoſe, that it very ſeldom occurs in its proper and literal ſenſe.

Let us only obſerve how freely the ſacred poets employ this image, how they dwell upon it, in how many different forms they introduce it, and how little they ſeem to fear exhibiting it with all its circumſtances. Concerning the reconciliation of the church to Almighty God, and its reſtoration to the divine favour, amongſt many images of a ſimilar nature, the elegant Iſaiah introduces the following:

" For thy huſband is thy maker;
" JEHOVAH, God of Hoſts, is his name:
" And thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Iſrael;
" The God of the whole earth ſhall he be
" called[2]."

And in another paſſage in the form of a compariſon:

" For as a young man weddeth a virgin,
So ſhall thy Reſtorer wed thee[3]:

" And

[2] ISA. liv. 5.

[3] The ambiguity of the word which I tranſlate " thy " reſtorer" has created inextricable difficulties to all the tranſlators

" And as the bridegroom rejoiceth in his bride,
" So

tranſlators and commentators, both ancient and modern. The LXX have miſtaken it, and the Maſorites have miſpointed it. Their authority has conſecrated the error, and almoſt eſtabliſhed it. Nothing however appears clearer to me, than that this word בניך is not the plural of the noun בן (*ben*, a ſon) but of the participle *benoni* of the verb בנה (*benah*, to build) and is parallel and ſynonymous to *thy God* in the alternate member. Compare the above quoted paſſage of ISAIAH, where alſo mark that *huſbands* and *creators* occur in the plural, with the ſame relation to the ſame word. By this explanation, every offenſive and indelicate idea is taken away from the paſſage, which I do not wonder proved an impediment in the way of the commentators. There is another paſſage of ISAIAH, in which the ſame word is egregiouſly miſunderſtood by the Maſorites:

" They that deſtroyed thee, ſhall ſoon become thy
" builders;
" And they that laid thee waſte, ſhall become thine off-
" ſpring." ISA. xlix. 17.

Thus, in ſpite of the Maſorites, the ſentence ought to be diſtributed; thus it ought to be explained conformably to the LXX, who have tranſlated not only this ambiguous word, (as alſo the CHAL. and VULG.) but the whole period alſo with the greateſt accuracy, elegance, taſte, and erudition:

Ταχυ οικοδομηθησῃ ὑφ ὢν καθηρεθης,
Και οι ερημωσαντες σε εξελευσονται εκ σου.

The

"So ſhall thy God rejoice in thee[4]."

The ſame image a little diverſified, and with greater freedom of expreſſion, as better adapted to the diſplay of indignation, is introduced by Jeremiah[5], when he declaims againſt the defection of the Jews from the worſhip of the true God. Upon the ſame principle the former part of the prophecy of Hoſea ought alſo to be explained; and whether that part of the prophecy be taken in the literal and hiſtorical ſenſe, or whether it be eſteemed altogether allegorical, ſtill the nature and principles of this figure, which ſeems conſecrated in ſome meaſure to this ſubject,

The ARAB. as in general, copies them. See a ſimilar idiom in Ps. cvi. 13. EXOD. ii. 18. and the ſame ſenſe of the verb *jotza*, JER. xxx. 21. NAHUM i. 11.

In this verſe alſo, for כי יבעל the LXX. SYR. and CHAL. read כי כיבעל. "Before יבעלוך one MS. adds כן, ſo the "LXX. SYR. CHAL. For ומישוש one MS. has ובמשוש, "and another במשוש." K. *Author's Note.*

[4] ISA. lxii. 5. See JOHN iii. 29, &c. and note (11) in anſwer to Michaelis, on the allegorical ſenſe of Solomon's Song. S. H.

"Sir John Chardin, in his note on this place, tells "us, that it is the cuſtom in the Eaſt for youths, that "were never married, always to marry virgins; and "widowers, however young, to marry widows." Harmer, Obſerv. ii. p. 482. T.

[5] JER. iii. 1, &c.

will

will evidently appear. None of the Prophets, however, have applied the image with ſo much boldneſs and freedom as Ezekiel, an author of a moſt fervid imagination, who is little ſtudious of elegance, or cautious of offending; inſomuch, that I am under ſome apprehenſion of his incurring no inconſiderable ſhare of cenſure from thoſe over-delicate critics who have been emitted from the Gallic ſchools [6]. His great freedom in the uſe

[6] Nothing can be more diſguſting to any perſon of common ſenſe, than the arrogant pretences of our neighbours on the continent to ſuperior refinement and civilization; and I confeſs, on a fair inveſtigation, I am utterly at a loſs to find in what this boaſted ſuperiority conſiſts. Is it ſeen in their enlarged and liberal notions of civil government, in their toleration and general information on politics and religion, in the mildneſs of their puniſhments and the equity of their laws? Is it marked by their progreſs in the great and uſeful ſciences, by their Bacons and their Boyles, their Newtons and their Lockes? Does it appear in the ſublimity, the grandeur, the elegance of their poets? Or is it demonſtrated by ſtill more certain marks of civilization, by the general cleanlineſs, decency, and induſtry of the common people? Is it ſeen in the convenience and grandeur of their public roads, and the accommdations afforded to travellers in every part of the kingdom? Does it appear in the face of the country, the high ſtate of cultivation, and the ſucceſs and improvement

uſe of this image is particularly diſplayed in two

prſvement of agriculture? Or laſtly, is it demonſtrable from the morals of the people at large, from the independence, the dignity, the probity, particularly of the trading claſſes of ſociety? I know no other marks of civilization than theſe; and if the admirers of Gallic frippery cannot anſwer theſe queſtions to my ſatisfaction, I ſhall continue to give but little credit to their pretenſions to extraordinary refinement and politeneſs. T.

That diverſity of manners, that delicacy of converſation, which is obſerved by ſome nations, and the coarſeneſs of others, reſults chiefly from the degree of intercourſe which ſubſiſts between the ſexes. In countries where the intercourſe is free and familiar, where the ſexes meet commonly in mixed companies, they accuſtom themſelves to a greater modeſty and delicacy in their converſation, which modeſty is eaſily transferred to their compoſition. Such a people, therefore, with whom entertainments would ſeem languid and dull without the company of young women, though perhaps not free from licentiouſneſs in their manners, will yet be chaſte and delicate in their expreſſions. Hence ariſes, in a great degree, that extreme delicacy in the people of modern Europe, which can ſcarcely bear ſome of the paſſages in Virgil, and the chaſteſt of the ancient poets. The caſe is quite different with the people of the Eaſt: for the men having ſcarcely any ſociety with the unmarried women, or with the wives of others, converſe together without being reſtrained by the bluſhes of females, or with their own wives, whom they regard in a very inferior light, and conſequently treat with all the inſolence

of

two parables [7], in which he deſcribes the ingratitude of the Jews and Iſraelites to their great Protector, and their defection from the true worſhip under imagery aſſumed from the character of an adulterous wife, and the meretricious loves of two unchaſte women. If theſe parables (which are put into the mouth of God himſelf with a direct allegorical application, and in which it muſt be confeſſed, that delicacy does not appear to be particularly ſtudied) be well conſidered, I am perſuaded, that the Song of Solomon (which is in every part chaſte and elegant) will not appear unworthy of the divine ſenſe in which it is uſually taken, either in matter or ſtyle, or in any degree inferior either in gravity or purity to the other remains of the Sacred Poets. To theſe inſtances I may add the forty-fifth Pſalm, which is a ſacred Epithalamium, of the allegorical application of

of familiarity: the women alſo converſe chiefly with each other; and as they are ſimilarly ſituated, are probably not leſs licentious. It is not extraordinary, therefore, if greater freedom of ſpeech ſhould prevail in thoſe countries, and if this, when transferred into their poetry, ſhould be found to offend our ears, which are accuſtomed to ſo much greater delicacy in converſation. M.

[7] Ezek. xvi. and xxiii.

which,

which, to the union between God and the church, I do not find that any doubt has hitherto been entertained; though many ſuſpect it, and not without good reaſon, to have been produced upon the ſame occaſion, and with the ſame relation to a real fact [8] as the Song of Solomon. Neither ought we to omit, that the writers of the New Teſtament [9] have freely admitted the ſame image in the ſame allegorical ſenſe with their predeceſſors, and have finally conſecrated it by their authority [10].

[8] Perhaps the completion and conſecration of the temple. See note (11). S. H.

[9] See MATT. ix. 15. JOHN iii. 29. 2 COR. xi. 2. EPH. v. 23, &c. REV. xix. 7. xxi. 2. xxii. 17.

[10] What CHARDIN relates of the Perſian poetry, may perhaps not be unworthy of the reader's notice in this place. "Debauchery and licentiouſneſs," ſays he, "are "the common topics of theſe compoſitions; but I muſt "not omit remarking, that the moſt ſerious of their "poets treat of the ſublimeſt myſteries of theology, un-"der the moſt licentious language, in the way of alle-"gory, as Afez in his *Koſel*." Voyage de CHARDIN, 4to. tom. ii. cap. xiv. But reſpecting this matter ſee the arguments on both ſides elegantly ſtated by the learned Sir WILLIAM JONES. *Poeſ. Aſiaticæ Comment.* cap. ix. *Author's Note.*

Theſe reaſons appear to me ſufficient to remove thoſe objections founded on the meanneſs of the imagery, which render many critics averſe to the allegorical explanation of this poem. I ſhall not attempt to confirm this opinion by any internal evidence from the poem itſelf, as I do not ſcruple to confeſs myſelf deterred by the great difficulty of the undertaking. For though induced by the moſt ancient authority, and ſtill more by the analogy of this with other ſimilar allegories contained in the Hebrew writings, I am fully perſuaded of the truth of what I have advanced; yet I am ſtill apprehenſive that it would be extremely difficult to eſtabliſh the hypotheſis by direct arguments from the internal ſtructure of the work itſelf [11].

But

[11] Our author has treated this very difficult ſubject with more modeſty and more addreſs than any of the commentators; and indeed has ſaid all that could be ſaid, excluſive of the theological arguments in favour of the allegorical ſenſe. I queſtion, however, whether he will be able to remove all doubt from the mind of a cool and attentive reader; the reaſons of my ſcepticiſm on this matter, I will, as a perſon earneſtly deſirous of the truth, endeavour briefly to explain; and I ſhall hold myſelf greatly

But if, after all, it be allowed that this work is of the allegorical kind, another queſtion

ly indebted to that man, who ſhall, upon rational principles, undertake to remove my ſcruples.

With regard to the authority of the ancient Chriſtian church, in a queſtion merely depending upon the expoſition of a paſſage in Scripture, I hold it of very little importance, not only becauſe the expoſition of Scripture does not depend upon human authority, but becauſe the fathers, as well on account of their ignorance of the Hebrew language, as of the principles of polite literature in general, were very inadequate to the ſubject, eagerly purſuing certain myſtical meanings, even with reſpect to the cleareſt paſſages, in the explanation of which, the moſt enlightened of the modern commentators have refuted them. The time of the fathers was ſo very diſtant from the period when this poem was compoſed, that it is impoſſible they ſhould have been poſſeſſed of any certain tradition concerning its purport and meaning. I ſhould entertain very different ſentiments, if I could find any mention of the Song of Songs in the New Teſtament; but on the moſt diligent examination, I have not been able to diſcern the ſlighteſt alluſion to that poem.

The authority of the Synagogue is of ſtill leſs importance in my eyes, ſince in other reſpects we have found it ſo little deſerving of confidence in its attempts at expounding the Scriptures. Such of the Jewiſh writers as have treated of the Canticles lived ſo many ages after the time of Solomon, after the total deſtruction of the commonwealth and literature of the Hebrews, that they knew no more of the matter than ourſelves.

tion remains, namely, to which of the three claſſes of allegory already ſpecified it properly belongs.

With regard to the analogy of other poems, all that can be ſaid is, that it was indeed poſſible enough for Solomon to celebrate the Divine love in terms analogous to thoſe deſcriptive of the human affections: but it is impoſſible to determine by that analogy, what kind of love he intended to be the ſubject of this poem. Shall we pretend to ſay, that his attention was wholly employed upon Sacred Poetry, and that he never celebrated in verſe any of the human affections? Or, becauſe ſome of the Hebrew poems celebrate the Divine goodneſs in terms expreſſive of the human paſſions, does it follow, that on no occaſion thoſe terms are to be taken in their literal ſenſe?

Our author has prudently declined examining the arguments which are uſually taken from the poem itſelf, and from its internal ſtructure, for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing the allegory. It is indeed very improbable, that in ſo long a poem, if it were really allegorical, no veſtiges, no intimation ſhould be found to direct us to apply it to the Divine love; nothing, which does not moſt clearly relate to the human paſſion: and that too, conſidering it as the production of one of the Hebrew writers, who are accuſtomed to mix the literal ſenſe with the allegorical in almoſt all their compoſitions of this kind. In ſo long an allegory one ſhould alſo expect a deeper moral than uſual, and one not generally obvious to be indicated: but no ſober commentator has ever been able to deduce from the Canticles any other than this trite ſentiment, that God loves his church, and is beloved by it. That this ſimple ſentiment ſhould be treated ſo prolixly, and nothing more diſtinctly

belongs. The firſt of theſe, you will recollect, was the continued metaphor; the ſecond

diſtinctly revealed concerning it, who can credit, but upon the ſoundeſt baſis of argument or proof? But in ſupport of it we have only the bare poſition, that the Hebrew writers ſometimes make uſe of allegorical expreſſions to denote the Divine love.

I am aware of the objections which are ſtarted by thoſe who reſt the matter upon theological arguments (though I cannot find that theſe are of great weight or utility in the preſent debate: for they ſeem rather calculated to ſilence than convince). They aſſert, that though the book has never been quoted by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, it was yet received into the Sacred Canon, and is therefore to be accounted of Divine original: and that there does not appear any thing in it divine, or worthy of ſacred inſpiration, unleſs it be ſuppoſed to contain the myſtery of the Divine love. Leſt, however, they ſhould ſeem to have proved too much, and leſt they ſhould diſmiſs the reader prepoſſeſſed with ſome doubts concerning the Divine authority of the book, I will venture to remind theſe profound reaſoners, that the chaſte and conjugal affections ſo carefully implanted by the Deity in the human heart, and upon which ſo great a portion of human happineſs depends, are not unworthy of a muſe fraught even with Divine inſpiration. Only let us ſuppoſe, contrary to the general opinion concerning the Canticles, that the affection, which is deſcribed in this poem, is not that of lovers previous to their nuptials, but the attachment of two delicate perſons, who have been long united in the ſacred bond, can we ſuppoſe ſuch happineſs unworthy of

ſecond the parable, ſtrictly ſo called; and the third, the myſtical allegory, which, under

being recommended as a pattern to mankind, and of being celebrated as a ſubject of gratitude to the great author of happineſs? This is indeed a branch of morals which may be treated in a more artificial and philoſophical manner; and ſuch a manner will perhaps be more convincing to the underſtanding, but will never affect the heart with ſuch tender ſentiments as the Song of Solomon; in which there exiſts all the fervour of paſſion, with the utmoſt chaſtity of expreſſion, and with that delicacy and reſerve, which is ever neceſſary to the life and preſervation of conjugal love. Let us remember, moreover, that Solomon, in his Proverbs, has not diſdained very minutely to deſcribe the felicities and infelicities of the conjugal ſtate. M.

Notwithſtanding all that this learned writer has ſo ably advanced againſt the allegorical import of this exquiſite Idyllium, I cannot be prevailed upon entirely to relinquiſh the idea. That compoſitions of a ſimilar kind are ſtill extant amongſt the Aſiatics is certain. The Loves of Megnoun and Leïleh have been celebrated in the Arabic, Perſic, and Turkiſh languages, with all the charms of poetic rapture, whilſt the impaſſioned lovers themſelves are regarded in the ſame allegorical light, as the bridegroom and bride in the Song of Songs. Excluſive, however, of this conſideration, there appear to ſtand forth in the compoſition itſelf indiſputable traits of an allegorical ſenſe. For, though (from our imperfect knowledge of the extraneous manners, arts, local peculiarities, and literature, of ſo ſingular a people, at ſo diſtant a period) we be now unable to apply the thing ſignified to its proper

ſign,

der the veil of ſome hiſtorical fact, conceals a meaning more ſacred and ſublime. I muſt confeſs,

ſign, yet a variety of images obtrude themſelves upon us that evidently contain a ſymbolical meaning.—JEHOVAH having choſen the Jewiſh nation as his peculiar people, and being frequently, *by the Prophets* AFTER *Solomon*, repreſented as *their* HUSBAND, and they perſonified as *his* WIFE; might not the conſecration (2 CHRON. vii.) of the Temple, as an habitation for the Lord to dwell in, and there receive them to himſelf, have ſuggeſted to Solomon the idea of a CONJUGAL UNION, and induced him to adapt an allegory to it?—As to the allegation, that this poem is not cited in the New Teſtament; it will, upon this ground, be of the leſs weight; for our Saviour, in the parables of the ten Virgins and the Marriage Supper, has adopted (if not from it) the ſame allegory, as well as in other paſſages [MARK ix. 15, &c.] and is himſelf not only pointed out to the Jews expreſsly in the character of a bridegroom, by John Baptiſt [JOHN iii.] but referred to, under it, by St. Paul [EPH. v. &c.] and more particularly in the Apocalyps. How far this conjecture may be ſupported, I will not venture at preſent to pronounce, but thus much it may be proper to obſerve, that ſuch images as the *tents of Kedar* compared to the *complexion of a young female*; the *tower of David* to her *neck*; *Tirza* to her *beauty*, and *Jeruſalem* to her *comelineſs*; the *fiſh-pools of Heſhbon by the gates of Bethrabbin*, to her *eyes*; the *tower of Lebanon looking towards Damaſcus*, to her *noſe*; the *mount of Carmel*, to her *head*; with others of a ſimilar kind, would, I think, have never been ſelected, to

confeſs, that I am clearly of the ſame opinion with thoſe who aſſign this production to the latter claſs of allegories; the reaſon of which will be evident, if it be admitted that there is any thing in the poem at all allegorical; ſince there can ſcarcely be any doubt that it relates in a literal ſenſe to the nuptials of Solomon. Thoſe alſo who are converſant with the writings of the Hebrew poets will eaſily perceive how agreeable the conduct of this poem is to the practice of thoſe writers, who are fond of annexing a ſecret and ſolemn ſenſe to the obvious meaning of their compoſitions, and of looking through the medium of human affairs to thoſe which are celeſtial and divine. The ſubject of the Canticles appears to be the marriage feaſt of Solomon (who was both in name and in reality the Prince of Peace); his bride is alſo

exemplify the beauties of a BRIDE, in any compoſition that was not allegorical.

The idea above ſuggeſted will, perhaps, receive no little countenance from the chapter cited as above (2 CHRON. vii.) Boſſuet's diviſion of the poem into ſeven days, is perfectly conformable to the fact mentioned in the 8th and 9th verſes—where we learn, that the dedication of the altar was celebrated by a feſtival that continued for the ſame ſpace of time. S. H.

called

called *Solomitis* [12], the ſame name with a feminine termination; though the latter Jews have ſtrangely diſguiſed and obſcured it by a vicious pronunciation: for Solomon and Solomitis have evidently the ſame relation to each other, as the Latin names Caius and Caia. This circumſtance of the names was not to be diſregarded, ſince they ſeem to have a very ſtrict connexion, and to afford a very diſtinct intimation of the latent meaning: for to what purpoſe innovate the uſual practice of the Hebrews, by aſſigning to the wife of Solomon the ſame name, unleſs from a regard to the force and meaning of the word? Unleſs it was meant to indicate, that the name of Solomon himſelf was not without importance, not without ſome further aim than merely the diſtinction of the perſon? Who this wife of Solomon was, is not clearly aſcertained: but ſome of the learned have conjectured, with an appearance of probability, that ſhe was the daughter of Pharaoh, to whom Solomon was known to be particularly attached. May we not there-

[12] שלמה שולמית; which may be expreſſed in Greek Σολομων, Σωλομιτις. CANT. viii. 1.

fore,

fore, with ſome ſhadow of reaſon, ſuſpect, that under the allegory of Solomon chuſing a wife from the Egyptians, might be darkly typified that other Prince of Peace, who was to eſpouſe a church, choſen from among the Gentiles [13]?

Concerning the explanation of this allegory, I will only add, that, in the firſt place, we ought to be cautious of carrying the figurative application too far, and of entering into a preciſe explication of every particular: as theſe minute inveſtigations

[13] This very nice and remote alluſion to Chriſt is totally deſtroyed by an unlucky obſervation of Dr. Hodgſon, who very properly remarks, that the Bride, who is the ſubject of this poem, could not be the daughter of Pharaoh, for in the third chapter, ver. 4. ſhe expreſsly ſays:

"I would not let him go,
"Till I had led him into the houſe of my mother."

"If therefore," ſays the Doctor, "ſhe had been the "daughter of Pharaoh, her mother's houſe would have "been in Egypt; whereas the ſcene of this poem evi- "dently lies at Jeruſalem." See Dr. HODGSON's Verſion of this Poem, *Notes on* chap. iii.

The quotations from the Canticles in this and the laſt Lecture are chiefly taken from the above elegant publication. T.

are

are ſeldom conducted with ſufficient prudence not to offend the ſerious part of mankind, learned as well as unlearned. Again, I would adviſe, that this production be treated according to the eſtabliſhed rules of this kind of allegory, fully and expreſsly delivered in the Sacred Writings, and that the author be permitted to be his own interpreter. In this reſpect the errors of critics and divines [14] have been as numerous as they have been pernicious. Not to mention other abſurdities, they have taken the allegory not as denoting the univerſal ſtate of the church, but the ſpiritual ſtate of individuals; than which, nothing can be more inconſiſtent with the very nature and ground-work of the allegory itſelf, as well as with the general practice of the Hebrew poets on theſe occaſions.

It remains to offer a few remarks upon the ſtyle of this poem. I formerly intimated that it was of the paſtoral kind; ſince the two principal perſonages are repreſented in the character of ſhepherds [15]. This circumſtance is by no means incongruous to

[14] BERNARD, DURHAM, SANCTIUS, BOSSUET, &c.

[15] See chap. i. 7, 8.

the manners of the Hebrews, whoſe principal occupation conſiſted in the care of cattle [16]; nor did they conſider this employment as beneath the dignity of the higheſt characters. Leaſt of all, could it be ſuppoſed inconſiſtent with the character of Solomon [17], whoſe father was raiſed from the ſheep-fold to the throne of Iſrael. The paſtoral life is not only moſt delightful in itſelf, but, from the particular circumſtances and manners of the Hebrews, is poſſeſſed of a kind of dignity. In this poem it is adorned with all the choiceſt colouring of language, with all the elegance and variety of the moſt ſelect imagery. "Every part of the Canticles," ſays a modern writer, "abounds in poetical beauties; "the objects, which preſent themſelves on "every ſide, are the choiceſt plants, the "moſt beautiful flowers, the moſt delicious "fruits, the bloom and vigour of ſpring, "the ſweet verdure of the fields, flouriſhing

[16] See GEN. xlvi. 32—34.

[17] Though not inconſiſtent with Solomon, yet exceedingly ſo in reſpect to his ſuppoſed Egyptian bride, as ſhepherds were held in abomination by the Egyptians. This confirms Dr. Hodgſon's idea in the laſt note. S. H.

"and

" and well-watered gardens, pleaſant ſtreams,
" and perrenial fountains. The other ſenſes
" are repreſented as regaled with the moſt
" precious odours, natural and artificial;
" with the ſweet ſinging of birds, and the
" ſoft voice of the turtle; with milk and
" honey, and the choiceſt of wine. To
" theſe enchantments are added all that is
" beautiful and graceful in the human form,
" the endearments, the careſſes, the delicacy
" of love; if any object be introduced which
" ſeems not to harmonize with this delight-
" ful ſcene, ſuch as the awful proſpect of
" tremendous precipices, the wildneſs of the
" mountains, or the haunts of the lions;
" its effect is only to heighten by the con-
" traſt the beauty of the other objects, and
" to add the charms of variety to thoſe of
" grace and elegance [18]." In the following paſſage the force and ſplendour of deſcription is united with all the ſoftneſs and tenderneſs of paſſion:

" Get thee up my companion,
" My lovely one, come away:
" For lo! the winter is paſt,

[18] BOSSUET, Pref. to the CANT.

" The

" The rain is over, is gone,
" The flowers are ſeen on the earth;
" The ſeaſon of the ſong is come,
" And the voice of the turtle is heard in our
" land:
" The fig-tree puts forth its green figs,
" And the vine's tender grapes yield a fragrance:
" Ariſe, my companion, my fair one, and
" come [19]."

The following compariſons abound in ſweetneſs and delicacy:

" How ſweet is thy love, O my ſiſter, O ſpouſe,
" How much better than wine is thy love,
" And the odour of thy perfumes than all ſpices!
" Thy lips, O ſpouſe, diſtil honey from the comb,
" Honey and milk are under thy tongue,
" And the ſcent of thy garments is like the fra-
" grance of Lebanon [20]."

There are ſome others which demand a more accurate inveſtigation.

" Thy hair is like a flock of goats,
" That browſe upon Mount Gilead [21]."

The

[19] Chap. ii. 10—13. [20] Chap. iv. 10, 11.

[21] Chap. iv. 1—5. " It is by no means an eaſy mat-
" ter to produce any other explanation of this and the
" following

The hair of the goats was ſoft, ſmooth, of

" following words, than that which had long ſince been
" received by the old tranſlators. The word which is
" here rendered *browſe*, denotes in the Arabic *to aſcend*, or
" *to paſs from a lower to a higher ſituation*; and I ſcarcely
" ſee how this ſenſe can be admitted in this place. The
" LXX have it αποκαλυφθησαν, and in chap. vi. 4. αναφανησαν
" (they appear). But the word *to ſhine* will perhaps
" agree better both in this paſſage and wherever this
" word occurs. But if the verb גלש be taken in this paſ-
" ſage in the ſenſe of *aſcending*, we muſt take the whole
" as it is above expreſſed; namely, as deſcriptive of a
" flock of goats covering the ſide of the mountain from
" the bottom to the top." H.

Galaſh does not mean to *browſe* or to *appear*, but to aſcend, whether we follow the SEPTUAGINT, the SYRIAC, the VULGATE, or the ARABIC copy. The uſe of the latter word in this place is not indeed very eaſy to conceive, as " to aſcend from mount Gilead" appears an odd phraſe. Poſſibly the paſſage ought to be conſtrued—" Thy locks are as a flock of goats ASCENDING, *which* " *are ſeen* from Mount Gilead." M.

Thy hair is like a herd of goats
That go down from Mount Gilead [in the morning to
the watering.]

Deriving גלש from an Arabic word, which Schultens explains *to go to be watered in the morning.*

That BROWSE, is a ſenſe obtained from the Syriac and Chaldee. Thoſe who render the word *ſhine*, are indebted to a tranſpoſition of letters in שלג *ſnow*, for this ſignification. S. H.

a yellow

a yellow caſt, like that of the bride[22]; her beautiful treſſes are compared with the numerous flocks of goats which covered this flouriſhing mountain from the top to the bottom.

" Thy teeth are like the ſhorn flock[23]
" Which have come up from the waſhing place,
" All of which have twins[24],
" And none among them is bereaved."

The

[22] See chap. vii. 5. and compare 1 SAM. xix. 13, 16. with xvi. 12. Conſult BOCHART, Hieroz. part i. lib. ii. 51.

[23] " The verb *Katzah* means to *cut off*, or *cut down*; " the interpretation, therefore, of the word *ketzubot*, " (ſhorn) which many have adopted, and which is con- " firmed by all the old tranſlations, appears to me the " moſt probable. From the ſame verb, I think, may be " deduced the ſignification *preciſely equal*, intimating that " the ſheep were all exactly ſhorn to one ſtandard as it " were. (See BOCHART, Hieroz. part i. lib. ii. 45.) " Will not this ſenſe better ſuit the connexion? Is not " the *whiteneſs* and *purity* of ſheep (and ſo of teeth) ex- " preſſed in theſe two lines, rather than their *evenneſs*, " which ſeems to be included in thoſe that follow? H.

[24] " The Arabic verb תאם denotes not only *to bring* " *forth twins*, but alſo *to have a companion*: whence תאום " *joined*, or *connected in a ſeries*; and תואמית, ſays GO- " LIUS, is *a pearl*, from the link, or order of the pearls.

" Nothing

The evenneſs, whiteneſs, and unbroken order of the teeth, is admirably expreſſed.

"Like the twice-dyed thread of crimſon are thy
"lips,
"And thy language is ſweet."

That is, thin and ruby-coloured, ſuch as add peculiar graces to the ſweetneſs of the voice.

"Like the ſlice of a pomegranate
"Are thy cheeks amidſt thy treſſes[25]."

Partly

"Nothing can be more expreſſive than this image of the "beautiful regularity and equality of the teeth. The "learned MICHAELIS preſers *twins*, referring perhaps to "the counterpart in the next member." H.

[25] "*Behind thy veil*, ſays MICHAELIS, from the Ara-"bic צמם *to faſten together*: and the well-known אלראס "מצממה GIGGEIUS to have a *ſtipated head*; placed with-"in a ſmall integument." H.

"As the opening bloſſom of the pomegranate are thy
"cheeks,
"From within thy locks."

Simon accurately interprets פלח by *the burſting forth of a flower*, and Guarini by *balauſtium*, a word which Pliny will enable us to explain. He obſerves, that the embryo of the pomegranate, which has its origin in the flower,

Partly obſcured, as it were, by her hair, and exhibiting a gentle bluſh of red from beneath the delicate ſhade, as the ſeeds of the pomegranate (the colour of which is white tinged with red) ſurrounded by the rind.

" Thy neck is like the tower of David
" Built for an armoury [26];
" A thouſand ſhields are hung up againſt it,
" All bucklers for the mighty."

The neck is deſcribed as long, erect, ſlender, according to the niceſt proportion; decorated with gold, gems, and large pearls. It

is called by the Greeks *citynus*; and adds, that the young bloſſom which breaks forth before the fruit becomes viſible, is diſtinguiſhed by the name *balauſtium*. Dioſcorides, however, has remarked, that *balauſtium* is the bloſſom of the *wild*, and *citynus* of the *cultivated* pomegranate. [See Notes on Vathek, p. 309, &c.]—צמה here tranſlated locks in a figurative ſenſe, is properly that radiated down which grows round the bloſſom of the pomegranate, and partially ſhades it, as the hair does the cheeks. S. H.

[26] " The word תלפיות, which may be numbered among " thoſe that occur but once, certain critics, ſays R. L. B. " GERSHOM, derive from תלה, to ſuſpend, and פיות, that " is, חרבות, of a ſword: others from תלה, and אלף 1000, " ſuppoſe of ſwords: thus in the following ſentence, אלף " המגן תלוי עליו will afford an etymological explication of " this word." H.

is

is compared with ſome turret of the citadel of Sion, more lofty than the reſt, remarkable for its elegance, and not leſs illuſtrious for its architecture than for the trophies with which it was adorned, being hung round with ſhields and other implements of war.

" Thy two breaſts are like two young kids,
" Twins of the gazal, that browſe among the
" lilies [27]."

Delicate and ſmooth, ſtanding equally prominent from the ivory boſom. The animal

[27] " Thy two paps are like two young kids,
" Twins of the gazal,
" That browſe amongſt the lilies."

The points of ſimilitude between the objects here compared, I apprehend to conſiſt:

1. In the *colour* of theſe young animals, which in the original is called עפר, *white deepening into red* (from an Arabic word of this import) whence their name is derived.

2. In their *relative height*, as juſt riſing above the growth of lilies: they being compared to " paps *that never gave* " *ſuck*."

Theſe circumſtances are noticed to juſtify this tranſlation, for the *fawns* of a ROE, neither in *colour* nor *height*, at all correſpond to the objects compared. S. H.

with which they are compared is an animal of exquiſite beauty, and from that circumſtance it derives its name in the Hebrew. Nothing can, I think, be imagined more truly elegant and poetical than all theſe paſſages, nothing more apt or expreſſive, than theſe compariſons. The diſcovery of theſe excellencies, however, only ſerves to increaſe our regret for the many beauties which we have loſt, the perhaps ſuperior graces, which extreme antiquity ſeems to have overcaſt with an impenetrable ſhade[28].

[28] It is much to be lamented, that no commentator has ariſen ſufficiently qualified to explain this beautiful poem. Thoſe who have attempted it have been ſcholaſtic divines, rather indeed myſtics, and have entirely overlooked the obvious and more elegant meaning. Indeed the taſk is by no means eaſy: beſides a very accurate and idiomatical knowledge of the Oriental languages, an intimate acquaintance with the manners of antiquity, and no ſmall information concerning natural hiſtory, will be requiſite: to theſe muſt be added a good deal of reading in the Arabic poetry, particularly in their compoſitions of the amorous kind, and laſt of all a true taſte for poetry. Very few of theſe qualities have exiſted ſeparately, and never all of them conjunctly in thoſe who have undertaken to illuſtrate this poem.

In order to exemplify how much might be effected towards clearing up the obſcurities of this moſt elegant compoſition, by a knowledge of natural hiſtory alone, I will

will endeavour to explain my opinion of ſome difficult paſſages (chap. v. 11, 14. vii. 6, 14.) In ch. v. ver. 6, 11. moſt people are ignorant, and at a loſs to conjecture, what may be the meaning of תלתלים: the Seventy and the Vulgate render it ελατας (elatas) or the downy ſubſtance in which the dates are involved; nor is this tranſlation very different from the Arabic, which renders it the *branch of the palm-tree from which the dates depend.* But what relation can this bear to the human hair? I anſwer, the reſemblance is obvious to any perſon, who has ſeen the object of the compariſon, or has remarked the plate of it annexed to the notes on *Theophraſtus's Hiſtory of Plants by* JO. BUDEUS.—But how is Solomon conſiſtent, in the ſame verſe ſpeaking of raven locks, and a golden head?

" His head is of pure gold,
" The locks of which reſemble the branches of the palm-
" tree,
" And black as the raven."

To reconcile this difficulty, it is neceſſary to know, that although the Orientals may poſſibly admire *raven locks* in their natural ſtate, yet they are accuſtomed to dye them with *henna* (ſo they call the oil of privet) in order to give them a yellow or golden caſt: this is an ancient cuſtom, though the exiſtence of it among the Hebrews may be diſputed; but probably for this ſame purpoſe they might make uſe of gold duſt, as the Latins are known to have done.

With the ſame *henna* they ſtain the countenance, as well as the hands and arms, which firſt changes them to an azure blue, and they grow yellow by degrees; and this they eſteem a great object of beauty, though it would

be accounted deformity with us.—This obſervation will enable us to underſtand better ſome phraſes in the 14th and 15th verſes of the ſame chapter:

" His hands are as gold rings
" Inlaid with chryſolite:
" His belly as plates of ivory,
" Incloſed in ſapphire:
" His legs are as columns of marble
" Upon a baſe of gold."

The fingers being ſtained with *henna*, appeared as if they had gold rings on, ſet with chryſolite; which gem was *formerly* of a yellow colour. I ſay formerly, becauſe the ſame ſtone which we call the *topaz* was the ancient chryſolite. (See HILL's *Hiſt. of Foſſils.*) But if by the word *tarſhiſh* we underſtand the ancient hyacinth or amethyſt, an azure colour will then be alluded to, which the ſame henna produces on the ſkin. The whiteneſs of the body, covered with a delicate purple veſt, is finely compared to ivory overlaid with ſapphire. *Sheſh* is without doubt figured marble: to which the legs and thighs are compared, from the blue and ſerpentine veins which run along them, and which are more pellucid in proportion to the fineneſs of the ſkin. The baſes are golden ſlippers.

The 5th verſe of the viith chapter is among the moſt difficult. The head of the king's daughter is compared to the pyramidal top of Carmel, covered with thick trees, by which ſimile is, I apprehend, intimated the quantity and beauty of her hair. The word *dallat* alſo occurs for hair, in the explanation of which commentators have been greatly perplexed; ſome, led away by a whimſical etymology, have ſuppoſed it to mean *thin*, *hair*, as if this could

could poſſibly be a ſubject of flattery to a young lady. In my opinion, the word is derived from the Arabic, as well as the Chaldaic word דלול (the fringe of a garment or tent) and means any thing pendant, or hanging looſe. The hair is compared to purple, not however, I think, on account of the colour: for the henna, with which they ſtained their hair, makes it yellow, not purple: I ſuſpect ſome alluſion is rather intended to the animal which produces purple. That animal is of a pyramidal form, riſing beautifully in a ſpiral cone, whence it is called *aregman*, from its likeneſs to the ſtone monuments. There follows מלך אסור ברהטים, which, with ſome degree of heſitation, I venture to tranſlate, "as a king encircled with a diadem:" the Septuagint has it, ως πορφυρα βασιλεως, περιδεμενη ελιγμασι. The upright Oriental tiara is alluded to, the mark of royalty, which is more noble the higher it is. Thus the verſe may be explained, and it will then be found to preſent a juſt picture of the Oriental head-dreſs:

"Thine head reſembles Carmel:
"And thine hair is raiſed like the ſhell of the purple,
"Like a king encircled with diadems."

In the latter verſes of the ſame chapter there is an elegant deſcription of Spring, but what chiefly creates difficulty is the *dudaim*, which are ſaid to *produce odours*. The famous CELSIUS, in his *Sacred Botany*, ſeems to have been peculiarly unfortunate on this ſubject. The word is tranſlated *mandragoræ* (or mandrake) on the moſt ancient authority: but Celſius cannot allow this plant any place in a love poem, becauſe it has in reality a bad ſmell. The text explained from the Arabic is, "The mandrakes produce a *ſtrong* odour." We

muſt remember, that it was the opinion of all the Orientals, that the mandrake was of eſpecial efficacy in love potions; the truth of which opinion is of no concern to us, if we only allow it to have been the general opinion of the Eaſtern nations. The text therefore implies, "The mandrake will breathe its ſtrong and tom "niferous odours, and provoke to love."

LEC-

LECTURE XXXII.

OF THE POEM OF JOB.

In order to criticiſe the book of Job with any degree of ſatisfaction to his auditors, the critic muſt explain his own ſentiments concerning the work in general.—The book of Job a ſingular compoſition, and has little or no connexion with the affairs of the Hebrews.—The ſcat of the hiſtory is Idumæa; and the characters are evidently Idumæan of the family of Abraham; the author appears to be an Idumæan, who ſpoke the Hebrew as his vernacular tongue.—Neither Elihu nor Moſes, rather Job himſelf, or ſome contemporary.—This appears to be the oldeſt book extant: founded upon true hiſtory, and contains no allegory.—Although extremely obſcure, ſtill the general ſubject and deſign are ſufficiently evident.—A ſhort and general analyſis of the whole work; in which the obſcurer paſſages are brought as little as poſſible in queſtion.—The deductions from this diſquiſition —1. The ſubject of the controverſy between Job and his friends.—2. The ſubject of the whole Poem.—3. Its end or purpoſe.—All queſtions not neceſſarily appertaining to this point to be avoided.

SUCH a diverſity of opinions has prevailed in the learned world concerning the nature and deſign of the Poem of Job, that the only point in which commentators ſeem to agree, is the extreme obſcurity of the ſubject.

ſubject. To engage, therefore, in an undertaking on which ſo much erudition has been expended, to tread the ſame paths which ſo many have already traverſed in vain, may ſeem to require ſome apology for the temerity, not to ſay the preſumption of the attempt. Though I might alledge, that the authority of the moſt learned men is leſſened in ſome meaſure by the diſcordance of their opinions; and that therefore the failure of others is the more readily to be excuſed; I will, however, make uſe of no ſuch defence, but will entrench myſelf rather in the neceſſity and in the nature of my preſent undertaking. I pretend not to any new diſcoveries; I preſume not to determine the ſubtile controverſies of the learned; I ſcarcely venture to indulge the hope of being able to illuſtrate any obſcurities. My ſole intention is to collect, from ſuch paſſages as appear the leaſt intricate, the moſt probable conjectures: and what I conceive to have any tolerable foundation in fact, that I mean to propoſe, not as demonſtration, but as opinion only. I proceed in this manner upon the principle, that, conſidering the great diſcordance of ſentiments upon this ſubject, it would be impoſſible

impoſſible for any man to diſcourſe with a ſufficient degree of accuracy and perſpicuity upon the ſtructure and parts of this poem, unleſs he previouſly explained his own ideas concerning the ſcope and purport of the work in general.

The book of Job appears to me to ſtand ſingle and unparalleled in the Sacred Volume. It ſeems to have little connexion with the other writings of the Hebrews, and no relation whatever to the affairs of the Iſraelites. The ſcene is laid in Idumæa[1]; the hiſtory of

[1] The information which the learned have endeavoured to collect from the writings and geography of the Greeks concerning the country and reſidence of Job and his friends, appears to me ſo very inconcluſive, that I am inclined to take a quite different method for the ſolution of this queſtion, by applying ſolely to the Sacred Writings: the hints with which they have furniſhed me towards the illuſtration of this ſubject, I ſhall explain as briefly as poſſible.

The land of *Uz*, or *Gnutz*, is evidently *Idumæa*, as appears from LAM. iv. 21. *Uz* was the grandſon of Seir, the Horite: GEN. xxxvi. 20, 21, 28. 1 CHRON. i. 38, 42. Seir inhabited that mountainous tract which was called by his name antecedent to the time of Abraham, but his poſterity being expelled, it was occupied by the Idumæans: GEN. xiv. 6. DEUT. ii. 12. Two other men

of an inhabitant of that country is the baſis of the narrative; the characters who ſpeak are

men are mentioned of the name *Uz*; one the grandſon of Shem, the other the ſon of Nachor, the brother of Abraham; but whether any diſtrict was called after their name is not clear. Idumæa is a part of Arabia Petræa, ſituated on the ſouthern extremity of the tribe of Judah: NUMB. xxxiv. 3. JOSH. xv. 1, 21. the land of Uz therefore appears to have been between Egypt and Philiſtia. JER. xxv. 20. where the order of the places ſeems to have been accurately obſerved in reviewing the different nations from Egypt to Babylon; and the ſame people ſeem again to be deſcribed in exactly the ſame ſituations, JER. xlvi—l.

Children of the Eaſt or *Eaſtern people*, ſeems to have been the general appellation for that mingled race of people (as they are called, JER. xxv. 20.) who inhabited between Egypt and the Euphrates, bordering upon Judea from the South to the Eaſt; the Idumæans, the Amalekites, the Midianites, the Moabites, the Ammonites; ſee JUD. vi. 3. and ISA. xi. 14. of theſe the Idumæans and Amalekites certainly poſſeſſed the ſouthern parts; ſee NUMB. xxxiv. 3. xiii. 29. 1 SAM. xxvii. 8, 10. This appears to be the true ſtate of the caſe: the whole region between Egypt and Euphrates was called the Eaſt, at firſt in reſpect to Egypt (where the learned Joſ. Mede thinks the Iſraelites acquired this mode of ſpeaking. MEDE's *Works*, p. 580.) and afterwards abſolutely and without any relation to ſituation or circumſtances. Abraham is ſaid to have ſent the ſons of his concubines, Hagar and Keturah, "Eaſtward, to the country which is commonly "called the Eaſt." GEN. xxv. 6. where the name of the region

are Idumæans, or at leaſt Arabians of the adjacent country, all originally of the race of

region ſeems to have been derived from the ſame ſituation. Solomon is reported "to have excelled in wiſdom all the "Eaſtern people, and all Egypt:" 1 KINGS iv. 30. that is, all the neighbouring people on that quarter: for there were people beyond the boundaries of Egypt, and bordering on the ſouth of Judea, who were famous for wiſdom, namely, the Idumæans, (ſee JER. xlix. 7. OB. 8.) to whom we may well believe this paſſage might have ſome relation. Thus JEHOVAH addreſſes the Babylonians: "Ariſe, aſcend unto Kedar, and lay waſte the "children of the Eaſt," JER. xlix. 28. notwithſtanding theſe were really ſituated to the weſt of Babylon. Although Job, therefore, be accounted one of the Orientals, it by no means follows, that his reſidence muſt be in Arabia Deſerta.

Eliphaz the Temanite: Eliphaz was the ſon of Eſau, and Teman the ſon of Eliphaz: GEN. xxxvi. 10, 11. the Eliphaz of Job was without a doubt of this race. Teman is certainly a city of Idumæa: JER. xlix. 7, 20. EZEK. xxv. 13. AMOS i. 11, 12. OB. 8, 9.

Bildad the *Shuhite: Shuah* was one of the ſons of Abraham by Keturah, whoſe poſterity were numbered among the people of the Eaſt, and his ſituation was probably contiguous to that of his brother, Midian, and of his nephews, Shebah and Dedan: ſee GEN. xxv. 2, and 3. Dedan is a city of Idumæa: JER. xlix. 8. and ſeems to have been ſituated on the eaſtern ſide, as Teman was on the weſt, EZEK. xxv. 13. From Sheba originated the Sabæans in the paſſage from Arabia Felix to the Red Sea: Sheba

of Abraham. The language is pure Hebrew, although the author appears to be an Idumæan;

Sheba is united to Midian, ISA. lx. 6. it is in the ſame region however with Midian, and not far from Mount Horeb, EXOD. ii. 15. iii. 1.

Zophar the *Naamathite*: among the cities, which by lot fell to the tribe of Judah, in the neighbourhood of Idumæa, Naama is enumerated, JOSH. xv. 21, 41. Nor does this name elſewhere occur: this probably was the country of Zophar.

Elihu the *Buzite*: Buz occurs but once as the name of a place or country, JER. xxv. 23. where it is mentioned along with Dedan and Thema: Dedan, as was juſt now demonſtrated, is a city of Idumæa; Thema belonged to the children of Iſhmael, who are ſaid to have inhabited from Havilah, even to Shur, which is in the diſtrict of Egypt, GEN. xxv. 15, 18. Saul, however, is ſaid to have ſmitten the Amalekites from Havilah even to Shur, which is in the diſtrict of Egypt; 1 SAM. xv. 7. Havilah cannot, therefore, be very far from the boundaries of the Amalekites; but the Amalekites never exceeded the boundaries of Arabia Petræa. (See RELAND Palæſtin. lib. i. c. xiv.) Thema, therefore, lay ſomewhere between Havilah and the deſert of Shur, to the ſouthward of Judea. Thema is alſo mentioned in connexion with Sheba, JOB vi. 19.

Upon a fair review of theſe facts I think we may venture to conclude, ſtill with that modeſty which ſuch a queſtion demands, that JOB was an inhabitant of Arabia Petræa, as well as his friends, or at leaſt of that neighbourhood. To this ſolution one objection may be raiſed:

it

mæan; for it is not improbable that all the poſterity of Abraham, Iſraelites, Idumæans, and Arabians, whether of the family of Ke-

it may be aſked, how the Chaldeans, who lived on the borders of the Euphrates, could make depredations on the camels of Job, who lived in Idumæa at ſo great a diſtance. This too is thought a ſufficient cauſe for aſſigning Job a ſituation in Arabia Deſerta, and not far from the Euphrates. But what ſhould prevent the Chaldeans, as well as the Sabæans, a people addicted to rapine, and roving about at immenſe diſtances for the ſake of plunder, from wandering through theſe defenceleſs regions, which were divided into tribes and families rather than into nations, and pervading from Euphrates even to Egypt? Further, I would aſk on the other hand, whether it be probable that all the friends of Job, who lived in Idumæa and its neighbourhood, ſhould inſtantly be informed of all that could happen to Job in the deſert of Arabia and on the confines of Chaldea, and immediately repair thither? Or whether it be reaſonable to think, that, ſome of them being inhabitants of Arabia Deſerta, it ſhould be concerted among them to meet at the reſidence of Job; ſince it is evident, that Eliphaz lived at Theman, in the extreme parts of Idumæa? With reſpect to the *Aiſitas* of Ptolemy (for ſo it is written, and not *Auſitas*) it has no agreement, not ſo much as in a ſingle letter with the Hebrew *Gnutz*. The LXX. indeed call that country by the name *Auſitida*, but they deſcribe it as ſituated in Idumæa; and they account Job himſelf an Idumæan, and a deſcendant of Eſau. See the Appendix of the LXX. to the book of Job, and HYDE, Not. in *Peritzol.* chap. xi. *Author's Note.*

turah

turah or Iſhmael, ſpoke for a conſiderable length of time one common language. That the Idumæans, however, and the Temanites in particular, were eminent for the reputation of wiſdom, appears by the teſtimony of the prophets, Jeremiah and Obadiah [2]: Baruch alſo particularly mentions them amongſt "the authors (or expounders) of "fables, and ſearchers out of underſtand-"ing [3]." The learned are very much divided in their ſentiments concerning the author of this book. Our Lightfoot conjectures, that it is the production of Elihu; and this conjecture ſeems at firſt ſight rather countenanced by the exordium to the firſt ſpeech of Elihu [4], in which he ſeems to aſſume the character of the author, by continuing the narrative in his own perſon. That paſſage, however, which appears to interrupt the ſpeech of Elihu, and to be a part of the narrative, is, I apprehend, nothing more than an apoſtrophe to Job, or poſſibly to himſelf; for it manifeſtly conſiſts of two diſtichs, while, on the contrary, it is well

[2] JER. xlix. 7. OB. 8. [3] BARUCH iii. 22, 23.

[4] JOB xxxii. 15, 16.

known

known that all the narrative parts, all in which the author himſelf appears are certainly written in proſe. Another opinion, which has been ſtill more generally received, attributes the work to Moſes. This conjecture, however, for I cannot dignify it with any higher appellation, will be found to reſt altogether upon another, namely, that this poem was originally a conſolatory addreſs to the Iſraelites, and an allegorical repreſentation of their ſituation: and I muſt confeſs, I can ſcarcely conceive any thing more futile than ſuch an hypotheſis, ſince it is impoſſible to trace, throughout the whole book, the ſlighteſt alluſion to the manners, cuſtoms, ceremonies, or hiſtory of the Iſraelites. I will add, moreover, that the ſtyle of Job appears to me materially different from the poetical ſtyle of Moſes; for it is much more compact, conciſe, or condenſed, more accurate in the poetical conformation of the ſentences: as may be obſerved alſo in the prophecies of Balaam, the Meſopotamian, a foreigner indeed with reſpect to the Iſraelites, but neither unacquainted with their language, nor with the worſhip of the true God. I confeſs myſelf therefore, on the whole, more

inclined to favour the opinion of thoſe who ſuppoſe Job himſelf, or ſome contemporary, to be the author of this poem: for that it is the moſt ancient of all the ſacred books, is, I think, manifeſt, from the ſubject, the language, the general character, and even from the obſcurity of the work[5]. Concerning

[5] In oppoſition to the antiquity of the poem, and to what I have urged above, that it appears to have no connexion with, or relation to the affairs of the Iſraelites, appeals have been made to JOB xxxi. 28. See *A free and candid Examination of the Biſhop of London's Sermon, Anonymous*, p. 165. In which the author enquires, "In "what nation upon earth idolatry was ever accounted a "crime but under the Jewiſh economy?" His argument is propoſed as unanſwerable, and is thought to be ſufficiently confirmed by the authority of Mr. LOCKE. I will however appeal to a higher authority than that of LOCKE, namely, that of reaſon and the ſacred writings; and will anſwer the queſtion in a few words: under the Patriarchal Economy, in every tribe and family under Abraham, Melchizedeck, Job, and the reſt. On the increaſe of idolatry Abraham was called by the divine command from Chaldea, to the end, that from him ſhould proceed a nation ſeparate from all others, who ſhould worſhip the true God, ſhould afford a perfect example of pure religion, and bear teſtimony againſt the worſhip of vain gods. Was is not, therefore, the duty of Abraham, who in his own tribe or family poſſeſſed all the attributes of ſovereignty, to puniſh idolatry as well as homicide,

ing the time alſo in which Job lived, although not directly ſpecified, I ſee no great room

cide, adultery, or other heinous crimes? Was it not the duty of Melchizedeck, of Job, of all thoſe patriarchal princes, who regarded the worſhip of the true God, ſedulouſly to prevent every defection from it; to reſtrain thoſe who were diſpoſed to forſake it, and to puniſh the obſtinate and the rebellious? In fact, in this alluſion to the exertion of the judicial authority againſt idolatry, and againſt the particular ſpecies which is mentioned here, namely, the worſhip of the Sun and Moon (the earlieſt ſpecies of idolatry) conſiſts the moſt complete proof of the antiquity of the poem, and the deciſive mark of the patriarchal age. But if it ſhould be ſuſpected, that the ingenuity of the poet might lead him to imitate with accuracy the manners of the age which he deſcribes, this indeed would be more to the purpoſe, and a more plauſible argument againſt the antiquity of the poem: but I cannot poſſibly attribute ſuch addreſs and refinement to a poet in a barbarous age; and after the Babyloniſh captivity. Further than this, the ſtyle of the poem favours altogether of the antique; inſomuch, that whoever could ſuppoſe it written after the Babyloniſh captivity, would fall little ſhort of the error of Hardouin, who aſcribed the golden verſes of Virgil, Horace, &c. to the *iron age* of monkiſh pedantry and ignorance.

With regard to the other difficulty, the ſolution of which appears ſo embarraſſing, namely, how any perſon not acquainted with the Jewiſh economy could aſſert, that "God viſits the ſins of the fathers upon the chil-

reaſon for doubt. The length of his life evinces that he was before Moſes, and probably contemporary with the Patriarchs. Not however to dwell upon the innumerable hypotheſes of the learned on this ſubject, I will only mention, that there is the utmoſt probability of his having lived prior to the promulgation of the law, from the nature of the ſacrifice which he inſtitutes conformably to the command of God, namely, ſeven oxen and ſeven rams; for it is plain from the example of Balaam, that a reſpect for that number prevailed in thoſe countries, and at that period, from the traditional accounts which were ſtill preſerved among them of the ſeven days of creation [6]. The truth of

" dren," JOB xxi. 19.? Let the *candid obſerver* for the preſent content himſelf with this verſe of Horace:

" Delicta majorum immeritus lues,
" Romane."———
" Though guiltleſs of thy father's crimes,
" Roman, 'tis thine, to lateſt times,
" The vengeance of the gods to bear."—

FRANCIS.

Author's Note.

[6] JOB xlii. 8. Compare NUMB. xxiii. 1, &c. There ſeems to be but little weight in this reaſoning, becauſe

of the narrative would never, I am perſuaded, have been called in queſtion, but from the immoderate affection of ſome allegorizing myſtics for their own fictions, which run to ſuch exceſs, as to prevent them from acceding to any thing but what was viſionary and typical. When I ſpeak of the poem as founded in fact, I would be underſtood no further than concerns the general ſubject of the narrative, for I apprehend all the dialogue, and moſt likely ſome other parts, have partaken largely of the embelliſhments of poetry; but I cannot allow that this has by any means extended ſo far as to convert the whole into an allegory. Indeed I have not been able to trace any veſtige of an allegorical meaning throughout the entire poem. And ſhould even the exordium be ſuſpected to be of this nature[7], we muſt recollect, that the hiſtorical books are not deſtitute of

cauſe Job, as an Idumæan, might have been a worſhipper of the true God, like Balaam the Meſopotamian; and therefore, though the law had been given to the Iſraelites, continued, notwithſtanding, to offer ſacrifice according to the traditionary mode of his progenitors. S. H.

[7] JOB i. 6, &c. ii. 1, &c. Compare 1 KINGS xxii. 19—22.

ſimilar narratives [s]. The exordium and concluſion I agree are diſtinct from the Poem itſelf,

[s] It has long been a diſpute among the learned, whether the Poem of Job conſiſts of fable or a true hiſtory: this queſtion, if authority alone be applied to, muſt long ſince have been decided in favour of thoſe who aſſert it to be a real hiſtory.

With me I confeſs, on the other hand, it is no longer matter of opinion, but I feel very little doubt that the ſubject of the Poem is altogether fabulous, and deſigned to teach us that "the rewards of virtue being in another "ſtate, it is very poſſible for the good to ſuffer afflictions "in this life: but that when it ſo happens, it is permit-"ted by Providence for the wiſeſt reaſons, though they "may not be obvious to human eyes." But before I proceed to examine the grounds of this opinion, it may be neceſſary to premiſe a few remarks in reply to thoſe who may think the divine authority of the book affected by the ſuppoſition of its not being founded in fact. For my own part, I cannot conceive that the ſanctity, the dignity, or the utility of that book will be in the leaſt affected, though we ſhould ſuppoſe no ſuch perſon as Job had ever exiſted.

If moral precepts, conveyed in the garb of fabulous narrations, allure the hearers by the pleaſure they afford, if they ſtrike the mind more forcibly, are more eaſily underſtood, and better retained than abſtract ſentiments, I ſee no reaſon why this mode of writing ſhould be deemed unworthy of inſpiration. Indeed, on the contrary, we find it made uſe of by Chriſt himſelf, nor does it at all derogate from his force as a moral teacher, that the good Samari-

itſelf, and ſtand in the place of an argument or illuſtration; that they are however coeval

tan, the rich man and Lazarus, &c. were not real perſons.

I ſhall not however reſt here; for I aſſert further, that the book of Job is more inſtructive as a fable, than it could poſſibly be as a true hiſtory. Taken as a mere relation of a matter of fact, it is neceſſary to ſuppoſe that the ſentiments and converſations are exhibited exactly as they were ſpoken, and are the ſentiments of mere mortals not actuated by the Spirit of God; for we find that God has reproved both Job and his friends as being ſeverally miſtaken. It would then be impoſſible to determine what was true or what falſe; no doctrine of religion, no precept of morality, could with certainty be deduced from theſe converſations. In the whole book, the hiſtorical part (and how ſhort is that!) and the words attributed to God himſelf would be alone divine, or of divine authority, the reſt would be all human. Conſidered as a fable, the caſe is different. The author, compoſing under the influence of divine inſpiration, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe has attributed to the fictitious characters, ſuch ſentiments as were proper and natural to their ſtate and circumſtances: we have then, in the firſt place, a picture of the human mind drawn by the finger of God; and in the next, we may reſt ſatisfied that Job and his friends err only in the principal matter upon which they diſpute, and only on the points for which God has reproved them; but that whatever is ſaid excluſive of this is founded on divine truth; ſuch is the mention of the angels by Eliphaz, and the aſſertion of Job, that there is

coeval with the poetical part, and the work of the ſame author, is evident, ſince they are

none pure among mortals. Finally, we are by theſe means enabled both to determine what are the ſentiments which immediately meet with the approbation of God, and what are the errors which are intended to be expoſed. An able writer in dialogue never fails to diſcover his own ſentiments: as from the books of Cicero on *the nature of the Gods*, we may collect with eaſe what the author thought, or rather doubted upon the ſubject, which would have been impoſſible, if he had only reported the actual words of the philoſophers who are ſuppoſed to have converſed on that ſubject.

I will now proceed freely to explain what at firſt I undertook to prove concerning the book in queſtion. It is ſurely more becoming to conſider the exordium, in which Satan appears as the accuſer of Job, rather in the light of a fable than of a true narrative. It is ſurely incredible, that ſuch a converſation ever took place between the Almighty and Satan, who is ſuppoſed to return with *news* from the terreſtrial regions. Indeed, the commentators who have undertaken to vindicate this part of the book, have done it with ſo much aſperity, that they ſeem conſcious of the difficulty under which it labours.

Nor will it ſuffice to anſwer as ſome temperate and rational commentator, like our author, probably will, and indeed as he himſelf hints: that the great outline of the fact only is true; and that the exordium is ſet off with ſome poetical ornaments, among which is to be accounted the converſation between God and Satan. For on this very converſation the whole plot is founded, and the whole

are indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the unravelling of the plot, which is not developed in the body

whole ſtory and cataſtrophe depends. One of the beſt of men is thrown into ſo many unexpected and undeſerved evils, that neither he nor his adverſaries are able to conceive how it can be conſiſtent with a benevolent Being, to plunge a good man into ſo great afflictions: nor has God condeſcended to explain the motives of it to them, but reproves them all for inveſtigating matters beyond their reach. But the author of the book undoes the knot which is left unreſolved in theſe converſations, and gives the reader to underſtand how indifferently thoſe reaſon concerning the Divine Providence, and the happineſs or miſery of mankind, who are only partially informed of cauſes and events. The Almighty acts for the honour of Job, of human nature, and of piety itſelf; he permits Job to be unhappy for a time, and refutes the accuſations of Satan even by the very means which he himſelf pointed out. Suppoſe, therefore, that what is thus related of Satan be fictitious, and all the reſt true, inſtead of the difficulty being done away, the conſequence will be, that the whole plot remains without any ſolution whatever. What our author has added concerning one of the hiſtorical books of Scripture, in which a ſimilar paſſage occurs, 1 KINGS xxii. 19—22. appears not at all to the purpoſe. It is not a hiſtory related by the author, nor does the author ſpeak in his own perſon, but a prophet explains a viſion which he has had. But thoſe who ſuppoſe the book of Job to be founded upon fact, allow that the hiſtorian ſpeaks in the firſt and ſecond chapters, who, if he did invent, would certainly, one would think,

take

body of the poem. There are, it is true, phraſes extant in the exordium, in which ſome

take that liberty only in matters which did not affect the great ſcope of the hiſtory, and not in a matter which, if it be ſuppoſed fictitious, reduces the whole book to nothing.

Moreover, the ſtyle of the whole book being poetical, and ſo ſublime, that I defy any man to imitate it in any extempore effuſion, is an irrefragable proof in favour of my opinion. Our author indeed pleads a very ſpecious excuſe: he thinks that the converſation and ſpeeches of the different characters have been poetically ornamented. And this argument I do not wiſh to confute. There are however others who defend the hiſtorical truth of the poem in a manner not quite ſo modeſt. Among the reſt, the famous SCHULTENS alledges it not to be incredible, that theſe are the actual words of the diſputants, if we conſider the amazing faculty which the Arabians poſſeſs of making extempore verſes. In anſwer to this, I muſt confeſs, that all he can urge on this ſubject will never perſuade me, that poetry, which is confeſſedly ſuperior to all that human genius has been able to produce, is nothing more than an extempore effuſion. Indeed nothing can be more ridiculous, than to ſuppoſe men in circumſtances of ſo great diſtreſs, in the midſt of difficulties and afflictions, capable of amuſing themſelves with making extempore verſes.

Theſe objections which I have juſt ſtated are well known to the commentators: but there are others not quite ſo common, which induce me to ſuppoſe the ſubject of this poem not hiſtorical but fabulous. So many

round

ſome critics have pretended to diſcover the hand of a later writer; the arguments, however,

round numbers and multiplications of them occur in the life of Job, as to be quite incompatible with mere chance. *Ten* children periſh, *ſeven* ſons (which though it be not a round number, is yet held ſacred and myſterious by the Orientals) and three daughters: 7000 ſheep, 3000 camels, 1000 oxen, and exactly half the number of aſſes. In lieu of theſe there are reſtored to him, 14,000 ſheep, 6000 camels, 2000 oxen, and 1000 aſſes, exactly the duplicate of the former numbers; together with exactly the ſame number of children as he had loſt, ſeven ſons and three daughters, and theſe from one wife. The ſame principle is found to extend to the years of Job's proſperity, which are multiplications of the number 70. Theſe circumſtances betray art and fiction in the narrator, who has introduced theſe round numbers which we know are the firſt to preſent themſelves to the mind: it bears no appearance of chance or caſualty, which, when it predominates in a ſeries of events, produces a wonderful variety, but very little of regularity or equality. The name of JOB too, which in the Arabic means returning to God, and loving him, and hating whatever is contrary to him, is ſo adapted to the character of his latter years, that we can never ſuppoſe it a name given to him by his parents, but invented by the author of the ſtory.

A fourth argument is, that the ſcene is laid in Arabia, yet the poem abounds ſo much in imagery borrowed from Egypt, that it is plain that country muſt have been extremely well known to the author, and indeed predomi-

nant

ever, of theſe critics I cannot eſteem of any great force or importance.

That

'nant in his mind, as I have endeavoured to prove in a Diſſertation recited before the R. S. of Gottingen.

But the moſt powerful of all proofs is, that ſome things appear in the book of Job which could not poſſibly have place in a true hiſtory. At a period when the longevity of the Patriarchs was reduced within the limit of two hundred years, Job is ſaid to have lived 140 years after his malady, and therefore could not be very ancient when he fell into this malady: nevertheleſs he upbraids his friends with their *youth* (who by the way could not be very young, ſince Elihu in xxxii. 6, 7, 9. reverences their hoary age) and adds, that "he would have diſdained to "ſet their *fathers* with the dogs of his flock," ch. xxx. 1. But what is more extraordinary, theſe ſame men boaſt of their own age, and ſeem to exact a degree of reverence from Job as their junior: thus Eliphaz, chap. xx. 10. "With us are both the grey-headed and the very aged "men much older than thy father." Theſe paſſages, therefore, ſo directly contradict each other, that they cannot be connected with true hiſtory. The opprobrium which he caſts upon the birth of his friends ſeems alſo an inconſiſtency, ch. xxx. 1—6. as it is incredible, that ſo noble and rich a man ſhould ever have choſen his friends from the meaneſt of the people.

It remains only to remove one objection, with which thoſe who contend for the hiſtorical truth of the book of Job may preſs us. Job is quoted by Ezekiel along with Noah and Daniel, whom we know to have been real perſons, and they are propoſed by James as an example of patience,

That theſe points ſhould be accounted of a very ambiguous nature, and ſhould cauſe much

patience, EZEK. xiv. 14, 20. JAMES v. 11. as if it were improper or indecent to recommend the virtues of fictitious characters to our imitation, or as if this were not in fact the end of delineating ſuch characters. Neither is there the leaſt impropriety in inſtancing the ſame virtues in real and fictitious characters. Suppoſe a father to recommend to his daughters the examples of Lucretia and Pamela, as models of chaſtity and virtue, who would eſteem ſuch a diſcourſe reprehenſible, or think that it either took from the truth of the hiſtory, or gave a reality to the fiction?

To return to the point from which we ſet out: this poem ſeems to treat of the affliction which may ſometimes happen to good men, at the ſame time that the author ſeems to wiſh to accommodate the conſolation to the people of God, and to repreſent their oppreſſion under the character of Job. To this opinion it is objected by our author, that there appears nothing in the book like an alluſion to the manners, rites, or affairs of the Iſraelites. Of the latter I ſhall treat, when we come to ſpeak of the application of this poem to the hiſtory of the Iſraelites. As to the manners, they are what I call *Abrahamic*, or ſuch as were at that period common to all the ſeed of Abraham at that time, Iſraelites, Iſhmaelites, and Idumeans. But perhaps it may be thought neceſſary to inſtance thoſe cuſtoms which were peculiar to the Iſraelites, and by which they were diſtinguiſhed from the Arabians: this, however, would not diſplay much judgment in the author of a poem, the ſcene of which lies in Arabia; beſides, that

much embarraſſment and controverſy in the learned world, is nothing extraordinary; but that

that moſt of the peculiar cuſtoms of the Iſraelites, that I mean which diſtinguiſhed them from the other deſcendants of Abraham, were either derived from the Egyptians, or were taught them by Moſes: and who would require, that ſuch things as the Paſchal Lamb, and the Moſaic Feaſts and Prieſthood, ſhould be introduced into ſuch a poem? The frequent alluſions however to the country and the productions of Egypt abundantly anſwer this objection. Inſomuch, that though the ſcene is laid in Arabia, one would imagine the actors had been Egyptians. Nor are there wanting alluſions to the circumſtances of the Iſraelites. Theſe like Job loſt their children and poſſeſſions by the tyranny of Pharaoh: and, if I am not miſtaken, the diſeaſe is the ſame which affected Job, with that which prevailed among the Egyptians by the command of Moſes.

From theſe circumſtances I am much inclined to the opinion which attributes this book to Moſes. For is it to be imagined, that a native of Idumea ſhould croud his poem with images and figures borrowed from Egypt? Or what native of Arabia (for it muſt be allowed that the book of Job has ſome alluſions peculiar to Arabia) was ſo likely to intermingle the imagery of both countries as Moſes? To theſe may be added the alluſions to the *iſles of the bleſſed*, which are common to the book of Job and the Moſaic writings. I am well aware that there is more of the tragic, more of ſtrong poetic feeling in this book, than in the other relics of Moſaic poetry, which has induced our author to remark the diſcrepancy of ſtyle. But how

that the main object and design of the poem ſhould ever have been called in queſtion, may juſtly

how different are the language and ſentiments of a man raging in the heights of deſpair, from thoſe which are to be ſung in the temple of God? We muſt alſo remember, that the poetic ſtyle of an author in the flower of his youth is very different from that of his latter days. If Moſes were really the author of this Poem, he compoſed it about the age of forty years; but the reſt of his poems were written between the 85th and 120th year of his age; at which period I am often ſurprized to meet with ſo much vigour of language and ſentiment: and no other difference of ſtyle have I been able to diſcover. M.

If I might flatter myſelf that the reader would not be wearied with replications and rejoinders, I would requeſt his attention to a few animadverſions on theſe remarks of the Gottingen profeſſor. For though I thought it my duty to ſtate his arguments as fully as I could, conſiſtently with the limits of this work, I muſt confeſs that I do not myſelf feel by any means convinced; nor dare I venture to affirm, upon any ſuch preſumptive proofs, that the book of Job is altogether fabulous. I think it by no means follows, that becauſe a book contains ſome things which may with propriety be termed poetical fictions, it has no foundation whatever in fact. The poems of Homer contain more fictions of this kind than any commentator has pretended clearly to diſcover in the book of Job: and yet no ſober critic has denied, that there ever was ſuch an event as the Trojan war, on which thoſe poems are founded.

I cannot

juſtly excite our aſtoniſhment. For though many paſſages be confeſſedly obſcure, though there

I cannot help thinking with our author, that ſuch a man as Job might very poſſibly have exiſted, and that the leading facts concerning his ſudden depreſſion and conſequent misfortunes might really have happened; and yet that the poet, in relating theſe facts, may have added ſuch machinery, and other poetical ornaments, as appeared neceſſary to enliven the ſtory, and illuſtrate the moral. Though we ſhould not contend with the learned Profeſſor for the literal acceptation of the exordium; though we ſhould even admit with him, that it is not probable any ſuch converſation ever took place between the Almighty Governor of the univerſe and the great enemy of mankind, as is related in the firſt chapter; yet it by no means follows, that the inſpired writer had no grounds whatever for what he deſcribes perhaps poetically. The manner in which the Deity and the other celeſtial intelligences are ſpoken of in this poem appears neceſſary, when the human mind is called upon to contemplate their actions, and may be conſidered as a kind of perſonification in accommodation to our limited faculties, and is common in many other parts of Scripture.

With regard to the objection founded on the round numbers, I think it very weak when applied to the children of Job: and as to the cattle, the event being recorded ſome time after it took place, it is hardly reaſonable to expect that the numbers ſhould be ſpecified with the utmoſt exactneſs: indeed nothing could be more aukward or ungraceful, in a poetical narration, than to deſcend to units; and when the numbers are doubled at the concluſion,

there be ſeveral which I fear no human ſkill will ever be able to unravel; and though the obſcurity

ſion, I look upon it as no more than a periphraſis, expreſſing, that the Lord gave to Job twice as much as he had before.

As to the name: it is well known, that all the names of the ancients were derived from ſome diſtinguiſhing quality, and not always given at their birth as with us. (See *Eſſays Hiſtorical and Moral*, Eſſ. vi. p. 119.) Nay the objection, if admitted, would ſtrike at the authority of a conſiderable part of holy writ; for not only many of the perſons recorded there take their names from circumſtances which occurred late in life, but, in ſome inſtances, from the very circumſtances of their deaths, as *Abel* from *Habal* (vanity or nothingneſs) becauſe he left no offspring.

There appears at firſt ſight ſomething more formidable in the argument founded on the inconſiſtencies which he boaſts of having detected; nevertheleſs, I can by no means grant it all the credit which its author ſeems to claim. Both the expreſſions of Elihu, and thoſe of the other friends are very general, and I think improperly applied by the profeſſor: for the paſſage referred to, ch. xv. 10. by no means proves that the friends of Job were older than he: "*with us*, or *among us*," ſeems to imply no more than this, "older perſons than either you or we, "are *with us*, or of our ſentiments." Still more general is the complaint of Job, ch. xxx. 1. indeed ſo general, that to a fair examiner it is impoſſible it ſhould appear to have any relation at all to the friends of Job, as he is ſimply complaining of his altered ſtate, and among other

obſcurity conſiſt chiefly in the connexion of the incidents and the ſentiments, it by no means neceſſarily follows, that the whole is involved in impenetrable darkneſs. The caſe indeed is far otherwiſe, for one and the ſame light, though at intervals overcaſt, ſhines on through the whole, and, like a conducting ſtar, uniformly leads to the ſame point. If then any perſon will follow this guidance without perplexing himſelf with obſcurities which he will occaſionally meet, I have very little doubt but that he will clearly diſcern the end, the ſubject, the connexion, and arrangement of the whole work. It will, perhaps, be worth while to put to trial the efficacy of this maxim: let us, therefore, for

evils mentions the loſs of that reſpect which he was accuſtomed to receive from all ranks of people, inſomuch, that now even the *young*, the *children*, preſume to hold him in deriſion. The other argument is by no means concluſive, namely, that which is founded on the ſuppoſed opprobrium on the birth of his friends, as really I cannot conceive any part of this ſpeech to have the leaſt reference to them; or if it have, it is eaſy enough to ſuppoſe, that their fathers of themſelves might have been raiſed to opulence from a mean ſtation; and indeed ſuch a ſuppoſition is abſolutely neceſſary to give any point to the ſarcaſm of Job, admitting that it ought to be underſtood in the light our commentator ſeems to intend. T.

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the preſent, paſs over thoſe obſcurities which might impede our progreſs; and, making the beſt uſe of thoſe lights which are afforded by the more obvious paſſages, proceed with an attentive eye through the whole of the work, and obſerve whether ſomething ſatisfactory is not to be diſcovered relating to the ſubject of the narrative, and the deſign and intent of the poem.

The principal object held forth to our contemplation in this production is the example of a good man, eminent for his piety, and of approved integrity, ſuddenly precipitated from the very ſummit of proſperity into the loweſt depths of miſery and ruin: who having been firſt bereaved of his wealth, his poſſeſſions, and his children, is afterwards afflicted with the moſt excruciating anguiſh of a loathſome diſeaſe which entirely covers his body. He ſuſtains all however with the mildeſt ſubmiſſion, and the moſt complete reſignation to the will of Providence: "In all this," ſays the hiſtorian, "Job ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſh-"ly [9]." And after the ſecond trial, "In all

[9] JOB i. 22.

" this did not Job ſin with his lips [10]." The author of the hiſtory remarks upon this circumſtance a ſecond time, in order to excite the obſervation of the reader, and to render him more attentive to what follows, which properly conſtitutes the true ſubject of the poem: namely, the conduct of Job with reſpect to his reverence for the Almighty, and the changes which accumulating miſery might produce in his temper and behaviour. Accordingly we find that another ſtill more exquiſite trial of his patience yet awaits him, and which indeed, as the writer ſeems to intimate, he ſcarcely appears to have ſuſtained with equal firmneſs, namely, the unjuſt ſuſpicions, the bitter reproaches, and the violent altercations of his friends, who had viſited him on the pretence of affording conſolation. Here commences the plot or action of the Poem: for when, after a long ſilence of all parties, the grief of Job breaks forth into paſſionate exclamations, and a vehement execration on the day of his birth; the minds of his friends are ſuddenly exaſperated, their intentions are changed, and their

[10] JOB ii. 10.

conſolation,

conſolation, if indeed they originally intended any, is converted into contumely and reproaches. The firſt of theſe three ſingular comforters reproves his impatience; calls in queſtion his integrity, by indirectly inſinuating that God does not inflict ſuch puniſhments upon the righteous; and finally, admoniſhes him, that the chaſtiſement of God is not to be deſpiſed. The next of them, not leſs intemperate in his reproofs, takes it for granted, that the children of Job had only received the reward due to their offences; and with regard to himſelf, intimates, that if he be innocent, and will apply with proper humility to the divine mercy, he may be reſtored. The third upbraids him with arrogance, with vanity, and even with falſehood, becauſe he has preſumed to defend himſelf againſt the unjuſt accuſations of his companions; and exhorts him to a ſounder mode of reaſoning and a more holy life. They all, with a manifeſt, though indirect alluſion to Job, diſcourſe very copiouſly concerning the divine judgments which are always openly diſplayed againſt the wicked, and of the certain deſtruction of hypocritical pretenders to virtue and religion. In reply to

this, Job enumerates his ſufferings, and complains bitterly of the inhumanity of his friends, and of the ſeverity which he has experienced from the hand of God; he calls to witneſs both God and man, that he is unjuſtly oppreſſed; he intimates, that he is weak in compariſon with God, that the contention is conſequently unequal, and that be his cauſe ever ſo righteous he cannot hope to prevail. He expoſtulates with God himſelf ſtill more vehemently, and with greater freedom, affirming, that he does not diſcriminate characters, but equally afflicts the juſt and the unjuſt. The expoſtulations of Job ſerve only to irritate ſtill more the reſentment of his pretended friends; they reproach him in ſeverer terms with pride, impiety, paſſion, and madneſs: they repeat the ſame arguments reſpecting the juſtice of God, the puniſhment of the wicked, and their certain deſtruction after a ſhort period of apparent proſperity. This ſentiment they confidently pronounce to be confirmed both by their experience and by that of their fathers; and they maliciouſly exaggerate the ungrateful topic by the moſt ſplendid imagery and the moſt forcible language. On the part of

Job,

Job, the general ſcope of the argument is much the ſame as before, but the expreſſion is conſiderably heightened; it conſiſts of appeals to the Almighty, aſſeverations of his own innocence, earneſt expoſtulations, complaints of the cruelty of his friends, melancholy reflections on the vanity of human life, and upon his own ſevere misfortunes, ending in grief and deſperation: he affirms, however, that he places his ultimate hope and confidence in God; and the more vehemently his adverſaries urge, that the wicked only are objects of the divine wrath, and obnoxious to puniſhment, ſo much the more reſolutely does Job aſſert their perpetual impunity, proſperity, and happineſs even to the end of their exiſtence [11]. The firſt of his opponents, Eliphaz, incenſed by this aſſertion, deſcends directly to open crimination and contumely; he accuſes the moſt upright of men of the moſt atrocious crimes, of injuſtice, rapine, and oppreſſion; inveighs againſt him as an impious pretender to virtue and religion, and with a kind of ſar-

[11] Chap. xxi. and xxiv. are indeed obſcure; the opinion, however, of Schultens on this ſubject appears to me more than probable. *Author's Note.*

caſtic benevolence exhorts him to penitence. Vehemently affected with this reproof, Job, in a ſtill more animated and confident ſtrain, appeals to the tribunal of All-ſeeing Juſtice; and wiſhes it were only permitted him to plead his cauſe in the preſence of God himſelf. He complains ſtill more intemperately of the unequal treatment of Providence; exults in his own integrity, and then more tenaciouſly maintains his former opinion concerning the impunity of the wicked. To this another of the triumvirate, Bildad, replies, by a maſterly, though conciſe diſſertation on the majeſty and ſanctity of the Divine Being, indirectly rebuking the preſumption of Job, who has dared to queſtion his decrees. In reply to Bildad, Job demonſtrates himſelf no leſs expert at wielding the weapons of ſatire and ridicule, than thoſe of reaſon and argument; and reverting to a more ſerious tone, he diſplays the infinite power and wiſdom of God more copiouſly, and more poetically than the former ſpeaker. The third of the friends making no return, and the others remaining ſilent, Job at length opens the true ſentiments of his heart concerning the fate of the wicked; he allows

that

that their proſperity is unſtable, and that they and their deſcendants ſhall at laſt experience on a ſudden, that God is the avenger of iniquity. In all this, however, he contends that the divine counſels do not admit of human inveſtigation; but that the chief wiſdom of man conſiſts in the fear of God. He beautifully deſcants upon his former proſperity; and exhibits a ſtriking contraſt between it and his preſent affliction and debaſement. Laſtly, in anſwer to the crimination of Eliphaz, and the implications of the others, he relates the principal tranſactions of his paſt life; he aſſerts his integrity as diſplayed in all the duties of life, and in the ſight of God and man; and again appeals to the juſtice and omniſcience of God in atteſtation of his veracity.

If theſe circumſtances be fairly collected from the general tenour and ſeries of the work, as far as we are able to trace them through the plainer and more conſpicuous paſſages, it will be no very difficult taſk to explain and define the ſubject of this part of the poem, which contains the diſpute between Job and his friends. The argument ſeems chiefly to relate to the piety and integrity

grity of Job, and turns upon this point, whether he, who by the Divine Providence and viſitation is ſo ſeverely puniſhed and afflicted, ought to be accounted pious and innocent. This leads into a more extenſive field of controverſy, into a diſpute indeed, which leſs admits of any definition or limit, concerning the nature of the divine counſels, in the diſpenſations of happineſs and miſery in this life. The antagoniſts of Job in this diſpute obſerving him expoſed to ſuch ſevere viſitations, conceiving that this affliction has not fallen upon him unmeritedly, accuſe him of hypocriſy, and falſely aſcribe to him the guilt of ſome atrocious but concealed offence. Job, on the contrary, conſcious of no crime, and wounded by their unjuſt ſuſpicions, defends his own innocence before God with rather more confidence and ardour than is commendable; and ſo ſtrenuouſly contends for his own integrity, that he ſeems virtually to charge God himſelf with ſome degree of injuſtice.

This ſtate of the controverſy is clearly explained by what follows: for when the three friends have ceaſed to diſpute with Job, "be-

"cauſe

" cauſe he ſeemeth juſt in his own eyes [12]," that is, becauſe he has uniformly contended, that there was no wickedneſs in himſelf which could call down the heavy vengeance of God; Elihu comes forward juſtly offended with both parties; with Job, becauſe " he juſti-" fied himſelf in preference to God [13]," that is, becauſe he defended ſo vehemently the juſtice of his own cauſe, that he ſeemed in ſome meaſure to arraign the juſtice of God; againſt the three friends, becauſe, " though " they were unable to anſwer Job, they " ceaſed not to condemn him [14]:" that is, they concluded in their own minds, that Job was impious and wicked, while, nevertheleſs, they had nothing ſpecific to object againſt his aſſertions of his own innocence, or upon which they might ſafely ground their accuſation.

The conduct of Elihu evidently correſponds with this ſtate of the controverſy: he profeſſes, after a ſlight prefatory mention of himſelf, to reaſon with Job, unbiaſſed

[12] Chap. xxxii. 1.

[13] Chap. xxxii. 2. Compare xxxv. 2. xl. 8.

[14] Chap. xxxiii. 3.

equally

equally by favour or reſentment. He therefore reproves Job from his own mouth, becauſe he had attributed too much to himſelf; becauſe he had affirmed himſelf to be altogether free from guilt and depravity; becauſe he had preſumed to contend with God, and had not ſcrupled to inſinuate, that the Deity was hoſtile to him. He aſſerts, that it is not neceſſary for God to explain and develope his counſels to men; that he nevertheleſs takes many occaſions of admoniſhing them, not only by viſions and revelations, but even by the viſitations of his Providence, by ſending calamities and diſeaſes upon them, to repreſs their arrogance and reform their obduracy. He next rebukes Job, becauſe he had pronounced himſelf upright, and affirmed that God had acted inimically, if not unjuſtly towards him, which he proves to be no leſs improper than indecent. In the third place, he objects to Job, that from the miſeries of the good, and the proſperity of the wicked, he has falſely and perverſely concluded, that there was no advantage to be derived from the practice of virtue. On the contrary he affirms, that when the afflictions of the juſt continue, it is becauſe they

they do not place a proper confidence in God, aſk relief at his hands, patiently expect it, nor demean themſelves before him with becoming humility and ſubmiſſion. This obſervation alone, he adds very properly, is at once a ſufficient reproof of the contumacy of Job, and a full refutation of the unjuſt ſuſpicions of his friends [15]. Laſtly, he explains the purpoſes of the Deity in chaſtening men, which are in general to prove and to amend them, to repreſs their arrogance, to afford him an opportunity of exemplifying his juſtice upon the obſtinate and rebellious, and of ſhewing favour to the humble and obedient. He ſuppoſes God to have acted in this manner towards Job; on that account he exhorts him to humble himſelf before his righteous Judge, to beware of appearing obſtinate or contumacious in his ſight, and of relapſing into a repetition of his ſin. He intreats him, from the contemplation of the divine power and majeſty, to endeavour to retain a proper reverence for the Almighty. To theſe frequently intermitted and often repeated admonitions of Elihu, Job makes no return.

[15] Chap. xxxv. 4.

The

The oration of God himſelf follows that of Elihu, in which diſdaining to deſcend to any particular explication of his divine counſels, but inſtancing ſome of the ſtupendous effects of his infinite power, he inſiſts upon the ſame topics which Elihu had before touched upon. In the firſt place, having reproved the temerity of Job, he convicts him of ignorance, in being unable to comprehend the works of his creation, which were obvious to every eye; the nature and ſtructure of the earth, the ſea, the light, and the animal kingdom. He then demonſtrates his weakneſs, by challenging him to prove his own power by emulating any ſingle exertion of the divine energy, and then referring him to one or two of the brute creation, with which he is unable to contend—how much leſs therefore with the omnipotent Creator and Lord of all things, who is or can be accountable to no being whatever [16]? On this Job humbly ſubmits to the will of Providence, acknowledges his own ignorance and imbecility, and "repents "in duſt and aſhes."

[16] See chap. xli. 2, 3.

On

On a due conſideration of all theſe circumſtances, the principal object of the poem ſeems to be this third and laſt trial of Job, from the injuſtice and unkindneſs of his accuſing friends. The conſequence of which is, in the firſt place, the anger, indignation, and contumacy of Job, and afterwards his compoſure, ſubmiſſion, and penitence. The deſign of the poem is, therefore, to teach men, that having a due reſpect to the corruption, infirmity, and ignorance of human nature, as well as to the infinite wiſdom and majeſty of God, they are to reject all confidence in their own ſtrength, in their own righteouſneſs, and to preſerve on all occaſions an unwavering and unſullied faith, and to ſubmit with becoming reverence to his decrees.

I would wiſh it, however, to be carefully obſerved, that the ſubject of the diſpute between Job and his friends differs from the ſubject of the poem in general: that the end of the poetical part is different from the deſign of the narrative at large. For although the deſign and ſubject of the poem be exactly as I have defined them, it may nevertheleſs be granted, that the whole hiſtory, taken together, contains an example

of

of patience, together with its reward. This point not having been treated with ſufficient diſtinctneſs by the learned, I cannot help eſteeming it the principal cauſe of the perplexity in which the ſubject has been involved.

I am not ignorant, that to thoſe who enter upon this inquiry, ſome queſtions will occur, which appear to require a ſeparate examination; ſince many of them, however, are chiefly connected with thoſe paſſages which are acknowledged to be obſcure, which have not yet been clearly explained, and which, whatever they may hereafter be found to import, are not likely to affect the truth of our concluſion, I have thought proper to omit them. Nor will I allow, that becauſe many things yet remain ambiguous and perplexed, we are therefore to doubt of thoſe which are more open and evident. In regard to certain more important doctrines, which ſome perſons of diſtinguiſhed learning have thought to be eſtabliſhed by this extraordinary monument of ancient wiſdom, as they either depend in a great degree on the obſcure paſſages above-mentioned, or do not ſeem to contribute in the leaſt to the main

deſign of the Poem, nor to be conſiſtent with the object of it, which I juſt now pointed out, I thought it ſtill more unneceſſary to introduce them in this diſquiſition. What I have advanced, I conceived fully adequate to the purpoſe of this undertaking, and a ſufficient introduction to a critical examination of the compoſition and beauties of the poem.

LECTURE XXXII.

THE POEM OF JOB NOT A PERFECT DRAMA.

The Poem of Job commonly accounted Dramatic, and thought by many to be of the ſame kind with the Greek Tragedy: this opinion examined:—A plot or fable eſſential to a regular drama; its definition and eſſential qualities according to Ariſtotle.—Demonſtrated, that the Poem of Job does not contain any plot: its form and deſign more fully explained.—Compared with the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles; with the Oedipus Coloneus; and ſhewn to differ entirely from both in form and manner.—It is nevertheleſs a moſt beautiful and perfect performance in its kind; it approaches very near the form of a perfect Drama; and, for regularity in form and arrangement, juſtly claims the firſt place among the poetical compoſitions of the Hebrews.

WHEN I undertook the preſent inveſtigation, my principal object was to enable us to form ſome definite opinion concerning the Poem of Job, and to aſſign it its proper place among the compoſitions of the Hebrew Poets. This will poſſibly appear to ſome a ſuperfluous and idle undertaking, as the point ſeems long ſince to have been finally determined, the majority of the critics

critics having decidedly adjudged it to belong to the dramatic claſs. Since, however, the term dramatic, as I formerly had reaſon to remark, is in itſelf extremely ambiguous, the preſent diſquiſition will not be confined within the limits of a ſingle queſtion; for the firſt object of inquiry will neceſſarily be, what idea is affixed to the appellation by thoſe critics who term the book of Job a Dramatic Poem: and after we have determined this point (if it be poſſible to determine it, for they do not ſeem willing to be explicit) we may then with ſafety proceed to enquire whether, purſuant to that idea, the piece be juſtly entitled to this appellation.

A poem is called dramatic, either in conſequence of its form, the form I mean of a perfect dialogue, which is ſuſtained entirely by the characters or perſonages without the intervention of the Poet; and this was the definition adopted by the ancient critics: or elſe, according to the more modern acceptation of the word, in conſequence of a plot or fable being repreſented in it. If thoſe who account the book of Job dramatic adhere to the former definition, I have little inclination to litigate the point; and indeed

the object of the controverſy would ſcarcely be worth the labour. Though a critic, if diſpoſed to be ſcrupulouſly exact, might inſiſt that the work, upon the whole, is by no means a perfect dialogue, but conſiſts of a mixture of the narrative and colloquial ſtyle: for the hiſtorical part, which is all compoſed in the perſon of the writer himſelf, is certainly to be accounted a part of the work itſelf, conſidered as a whole. Since, however, on the other hand, the hiſtorical or narrative part is all evidently written in proſe, and ſeems to me to be ſubſtituted merely in the place of an argument or comment, for the purpoſe of explaining the reſt, and certainly does not conſtitute any part of the poem; ſince, moreover, thoſe ſhort ſentences, which ſerve to introduce the different ſpeeches, contain very little more than the names, I am willing to allow, that the ſtructure or form of this poem is on the whole dramatic. But this conceſſion will, I fear, ſcarcely ſatisfy the critics in queſtion; for they ſpeak of the regular order and conduct of the piece, and of the dramatic cataſtrophe; they aſſert, that the interpoſition of the Deity is a neceſſary part of the machinery of the fable;

fable; they even enumerate the acts and ſcenes, and uſe the very ſame language in all reſpects, as if they ſpoke of a Greek Tragedy; inſomuch, that when they term the Poem of Job dramatic [1], they ſeem to ſpeak of that ſpecies of drama which was cultivated and improved in the theatre of Athens. It appears therefore a fair object of inquiry, whether the Poem of Job be poſſeſſed of the peculiar properties of the Greek drama, and may with reaſon and juſtice be claſſed with the theatrical productions of that people.

We have already agreed, that the greater and more perfect Drama is peculiarly diſtinguiſhed from the leſſer and more common ſpecies, inaſmuch as it retains not only the dramatic form, or the perfect dialogue, but alſo exhibits ſome entire action, fable, or plot. And this is perfectly agreeable to the definition of Ariſtotle; for although he points out many parts or conſtituents in the compoſition of a Tragedy, he aſſigns the firſt

[1] See CALMET, *Preface ſur Job.* HARE, Not. ad Ps. cvii. 40. CARPZOVII *Introduct. in Libros Biblicos*, part. ii. p. 76.

place to the plot or fable [*]. This he ſays is the beginning, this the end, this is the moſt important part, the very ſoul of a Tragedy, without which it is utterly undeſerving of the name, and indeed cannot properly be ſaid to exiſt. A plot or fable is the repreſentation of an action or event, or of a ſeries of events or incidents tending all to one point, which are detailed with a view to a particular object or concluſion. A Tragedy, ſays the ſame author, is not a repreſentation of men, but of actions, a picture of life, of proſperity and adverſity: in other words, the buſineſs of the poem is not merely to exhibit manners only, nor does the moſt perfect repreſentation of manners conſtitute a Tragedy; for in reality a Tragedy may exiſt with little or no diſplay of manners or character, its buſineſs is to exhibit life and action, or ſome regular train of actions and events, on which depends the felicity or infelicity of the perſons concerned. For human happineſs or proſperity conſiſts in action; and action is not a quality, but is the end of man. According to our manners we are denomi-

[*] Arist. Poet. cap. vi.

nated

nated good or bad, but we are happy or unhappy, prosperous or unsuccessful, according to actions or events. Poets therefore do not form a plot or action merely for the sake of imitating manners or character; but manners and character are added to the plot, and for the sake of it are chiefly attended to. Thus far he has accurately drawn the line between the representation of action and that of manners. He adds, moreover, that unity is essential to a regular plot or action, and that it must be complete in itself, and of a proper length [3]. But to comprehend more perfectly the nature of a plot or fable, it must be observed, that there are two principal

[3] ARIST. *Poet.* ch. vii. It is evident that the human mind can dwell on one object only at a time, and whenever it takes more into its view, it is by combination, as forming *one* object out of many, or as many objects contributing to *one* action. Painters observe this rule so minutely, that they will not suffer *attention* to be *divided* by two equal groups, by two principal figures, two equal lights or colours, or even two equal folds of drapery. I flatter myself in the above translation I have not obscured the meaning of Aristotle, so as to bring upon him the charge of inconsistency. When he speaks of unity being essential to a dramatic fable or action, he means it, I apprehend, as speaking of a whole. When, therefore, he

cipal ſpecies: for they are either complex or ſimple [4]; the former contains ſome unexpected viciſſitude of fortune, ſuch as the recognition of a perſon at firſt unknown, the recovery of a loſt child, or a ſudden change in the ſituation of the parties, or perhaps both; the latter contains nothing of the kind, but proceeds in one uniform and equal tenour. In every plot or fable, however, be it ever ſo ſimple, and though it contain nothing of the wonderful or unexpected, there is always a perplexity or embarraſſment, as alſo a regular ſolution or cataſtrophe [5]; the latter muſt proceed from the former, and indeed muſt depend upon it; which cannot be the caſe, unleſs there be a certain order or connexion in the incidents and events which inclines them towards the ſame end, and combines them all in one termination.

On fairly conſidering theſe circumſtances, I have no heſitation in affirming, that the

ſpeaks afterwards of plots or fables as ſimple or complex, by the latter term he muſt mean one plot or ſtory, which conſiſts of ſeveral incidents or viciſſitudes; and by the former a plot founded upon one ſimple and uninterrupted action, and ſo our author indeed explains him. T.

[4] ARIST. Poet. chap. x. [5] Ibid. chap. xviii.

Poem

Poem of Job contains no plot or action whatever, not even of the moſt ſimple kind; it uniformly exhibits one conſtant ſtate of things, not the ſmalleſt change of fortune taking place from the beginning to the end; and it contains merely a repreſentation of thoſe manners, paſſions, and ſentiments, which might actually be expected in ſuch a ſituation. Job is repreſented as reduced from the ſummit of human proſperity, to a condition the moſt miſerable and afflicted: and the ſentiments of both Job and his friends are exactly ſuch as the occaſion dictates. For here a new temptation falls upon him, by which the conſtancy of Job is put to the ſevereſt trial; and this circumſtance it is that conſtitutes the principal ſubject of the Poem. Job had, we find, endured the moſt grievous calamities, the loſs of his wealth, the deprivation of his children, and the miſerable union of poverty and diſeaſe, with ſo much fortitude and with ſo juſt a confidence in his own integrity, that nothing could be extorted from him in the leaſt inconſiſtent with the ſtricteſt reverence for the Divine Being; he is now put to the proof, whether, after enduring all this with firmneſs and reſignation,

ſignation, he can with equal patience endure to have his innocence and virtue (in which perhaps he had placed too much confidence) indirectly queſtioned, and even in plain terms arraigned. Job now ſinking under the weight of his miſery, laments his condition with more vehemence than before. His friends reprove his impatience, and drop ſome dark inſinuations to the apparent diſparagement of his virtue and integrity, by entering into very copious declamations concerning the juſtice of God in proportioning his viſitations to the crimes of men. Job is ſtill more violently agitated; and his friends accuſe him with leſs reſerve. He appeals to God, and expoſtulates with ſome degree of freedom. They urge and preſs him in the very heat of his paſſion; and, by ſtill more malignant accuſations, excite his indignation and his confidence, which were already too vehement. Elihu interpoſes as an arbiter of the controverſy; he reproves the ſevere ſpirit of the friends, as well as the preſumption of Job, who truſted too much in his own righteouſneſs. Job receives his admonitions with mildneſs and temper, and being rendered more ſedate by his expoſtulation, makes

makes no reply, though the other appears frequently to expect it. When the Almighty, however, condescends to set before him his rashness, frailty, and ignorance, he submits in perfect humility, and with sincere repentance. Here the temptation of Job concludes, in the course of which there was great reason to apprehend he would be totally vanquished: at the same time the Poem necessarily terminates, the state of things still remaining without any change or vicissitude whatever. The Poem indeed contains a great variety of sentiment, excellent representations of manners and character, remarkable efforts of passion, much important controversy; but no change of fortune, no novelty of incident, no plot, no action.

If indeed we rightly consider, we shall, I dare believe, find that the very nature of the subject excludes even the possibility of a plot or action. From that state of settled and unvarying misery in which Job is involved, arises the doubt of his integrity, and those insinuations and criminations which serve to exasperate him, and by which he is stimulated to expostulate with God, and to glory in his own righteousness. It was proper, therefore,

therefore, that by a continuance of the ſame ſtate and condition, he ſhould be recalled to an humble ſpirit, and to a proper reverence for the Almighty Providence. For it would have been altogether contrary to what is called poetical juſtice, if he had been reſtored to proſperity previous to his ſubmiſſion and penitence. The repentance of Job, however, we find concludes the Poem. Nor was it at all neceſſary, that the queſtion concerning the divine juſtice ſhould be reſolved in the body of the work, either by the fortunate iſſue of the affairs of Job, or even by the explication of the divine intentions: this, in fact, was not the primary object, nor does it at all conſtitute the ſubject of the Poem; but is ſubſervient, or in a manner an appendage to it. The diſputation which takes place upon this topic, is no more than an inſtrument of temptation, and is introduced in order to explain the inmoſt ſentiments of Job, and to lay open the latent pride that exiſted in his ſoul. The Almighty therefore, when he addreſſes Job, pays little regard to this point; nor indeed was it neceſſary, for neither the nature nor the object of the Poem required a defence of the Divine Providence,

Providence, but merely a reprehenſion of the over-confidence of Job.

If indeed we ſuppoſe any change to have taken place in the ſtate of affairs, the nature and ſubject of the Poem will alſo be changed. If we connect with the poetical part either the former or the latter part of the hiſtory, or both, the ſubject will then be the diſplay of a perfect example of patience in enduring the ſevereſt outward calamities, and at length receiving an ample reward at the hands of the Almighty: from this, however, the univerſal tenour of the Poem will be found greatly to differ. It will be found to exhibit rather the impatience of Job in bearing the reproaches and abuſe of his pretended friends: and this appears to lead to the true object of the Poem; for Job is irritated, he indulges his paſſion, he ſpeaks too confidently of his own righteouſneſs, and in too irreverend a ſtyle concerning the juſtice of God; in the end, he is converted by the admonitions of Elihu, and the reproofs of his omnipotent Creator. The true object of the Poem appears therefore to be, to demonſtrate the neceſſity of humility, of truſt in God, and of the profoundeſt reverence for the

the divine decrees, even in the holieſt and moſt exalted characters.

Should it be objected, that I have contended with a ſcrupulous perverſeneſs concerning the meaning of a word; and ſhould it after all be affirmed, that this very temptation of Job, this diſpute itſelf poſſeſſes in ſome degree the form or appearance of an action: I am content to ſubmit the trial to another iſſue, and to be judged by a fair inveſtigation of the practice of the Greek Poets upon ſimilar occaſions. There is no neceſſity to remind this aſſembly, with how much art and deſign the fable or plot of the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles appears to have been conſtructed; with what powers of imagination and judgment the proceſs of the drama is conducted; and in what manner, by a regular ſucceſſion of events, ariſing naturally from each other, the horrid ſecret is developed, which as ſoon as diſcloſed precipitates the hero of the Tragedy from the ſummit of human happineſs into the loweſt depths of miſery and ruin. Let us only ſuppoſe Sophocles to have treated the ſame ſubject in a different manner, and to have formed a poem on that part of the ſtory alone

alone which is comprized in the laſt act. Here Oedipus would be indeed exhibited as an object of the moſt tender compaſſion; here would be a ſpacious field for the diſplay of the moſt intereſting and tragical affections: the fatal cataſtrophe would be deplored; the blindneſs, diſgrace, exile of the hero, would enhance the diſtreſs of the ſcene; and to the bitterneſs of preſent calamity would be added the ſtill more bitter remembrance of the paſt. The poet might copiouſly diſplay the ſorrow and commiſeration of his daughters, his deteſtation of himſelf, and of all that belong to him, and more copiouſly, of thoſe who had preſerved him when expoſed, who had ſupported and educated him: all theſe topics the Poet has ſlightly touched upon in theſe lines,

O curſt Cithæron! why didſt thou receive me?
Or when thou didſt, how could'ſt thou not deſtroy me?

The ſucceeding paſſages are alſo extremely pathetic. Theſe would eaſily admit of amplification, and, when the ardour of grief was a little abated, he might have added his vindication of himſelf, his aſſeverations of his

his innocence, his plea of ignorance, and fatal neceſſity, and his impaſſioned exclamations againſt Fortune and the Gods. From all this might be conſtructed a Poem, great, ſplendid, copious, diverſified; and the ſubject would alſo furniſh a topic of diſputation not unlike that of Job. It might alſo aſſume in ſome meaſure the dramatic form; the ſame characters that appear in the Tragedy might be introduced; it might poſſeſs the exact proportions and all the requiſites of a drama, fable alone excepted, which indeed conſtitutes the very eſſence of a Dramatic Poem, and without which all other qualities are of no avail: for the Greeks would have called ſuch a production a Monody, or Elegiac Dialogue, or any thing but a Tragedy.

This opinion receives ſtill further confirmation from the example and authority of Sophocles himſelf in another inſtance. For when he again introduces the ſame Oedipus upon the ſtage in another Tragedy, though the ground-work of the piece be nearly that which we have been deſcribing, the conduct of it is totally different. This piece is called Oedipus Coloneus; the plot or fable is quite ſimple,

ſimple, on which account it is a fairer object of compariſon with the Poem of Job than any the plot of which is more complex. Oedipus is introduced blind, exiled, and oppreſſed with miſery: none of thoſe circumſtances above-mentioned have eſcaped the Poet; ſuch as the lamentation of his miſery, the paſſionate exclamations againſt Fate and the Gods, and the vindication of his innocence. Theſe, however, do not form the baſis of the Poem; they are introduced merely as circumſtances, which afford matter of amplification, and which ſeem to flow from that elegant plot or action he has invented. Oedipus, led by his daughter, arrives at Colonus, there to die and be interred according to the admonition of the Oracle; for upon theſe circumſtances the victory of the Athenians over the Thebans was made to depend. The place being accounted ſacred, the Athenians are unwilling to receive him; but Theſeus affords him refuge and protection. Another of his daughters is introduced, who informs him of the diſcord between her brothers, alſo that Creon is coming, with an intention of bringing him back to his own country in purſuance of a

decree of the Thebans. After this Creon arrives; he endeavours to perſuade Oedipus to return to Thebes; and on his refuſal, attempts to make uſe of violence. Theſeus protects Oedipus: and in the mean time Polynices arrives, with a view of bringing over his father to his party in the war againſt the Thebans: this being the only condition on which he was to hope for victory. Oedipus refuſes, and execrates his ſon in the ſevereſt terms: in concluſion, the anſwer of the Oracle being communicated to Theſeus, Oedipus dies, and is ſecretly buried there. In this manner is conſtructed a regular, perfect, and important action or plot; all the parts of which are connected together in one deſign, and tend exactly to the ſame concluſion, and in which are involved the fates of both Thebes and Athens. The manners, paſſions, characters, and ſentiments, ſerve to adorn, but not to ſupport the fable. Without any ſtriking repreſentation of theſe, the plot or action would ſtill remain, and would of itſelf ſuſtain the Tragedy; but if the action be removed, though all the reſt remain, it is evident that the Tragedy is totally annihilated.

From

From theſe obſervations it will, I think, be evident, that the Poem of Job cannot properly be brought into compariſon with either Oedipus of Sophocles, or with any other of the Greek Tragedies. It will be evident, I think, that this Poem ought not to be accounted of the ſame kind; nor can poſſibly be claſſed with them, unleſs the whole nature and form of either the Greek or the Hebrew Poem be changed; or unleſs the plot or action be taken from the one, or added to the other: for without this great eſſential no Poem can indeed be accounted a perfect drama.

But though I have urged thus much againſt its claim to that title, let it not be underſtood that I wiſh to derogate from its merits. That cenſure will rather apply to thoſe who, by criticiſing it according to foreign and improper rules, would make that compoſition appear lame and imperfect, which on the contrary is in its kind moſt beautiful and perfect. If indeed the extreme antiquity of this Poem, the obſcurity and the difficulty that neceſſarily enſue from that circumſtance be conſidered; and if allowance be made for the total want of plot

and action, we ſhall have cauſe to wonder at the elegance and intereſt which we find in its form, conduct, and economy. The arrangement is perfectly regular, and every part is admirably adapted to its end and deſign. The antiquary or the critic, who has been at the pains to trace the hiſtory of the Grecian drama from its firſt weak and imperfect efforts, and has carefully obſerved its tardy progreſs to perfection [6], will ſcarcely, I think, without aſtoniſhment contemplate a Poem produced ſo many ages before, ſo elegant in its deſign, ſo regular in its ſtructure, ſo animated, ſo affecting, ſo near to the true dramatic model: while, on the contrary, the united wiſdom of Greece, after ages of ſtudy, was not able to produce any thing approaching to perfection in this walk of poetry before the time of Æſchylus. But however this be—whatever rank may be aſſigned to Job, in a compariſon with the Poets of Greece, to whom we muſt undoubtedly allow the merit of art and method; amongſt the Hebrews, it muſt certainly be allowed, in this reſpect, to be unrivalled. It is of

[6] See Note (2) on LECT. XXX.

little

little conſequence whether it be eſteemed a didactic or an ethic, a pathetic or dramatic Poem; only let it be aſſigned a diſtinct and conſpicuous ſtation in the higheſt rank of the Hebrew Poetry.

LECTURE XXXIV.

OF THE MANNERS, SENTIMENTS, AND STYLE OF THE POEM OF JOB.

Though the Poem of Job do not contain a plot or fable, it poſſeſſes, nevertheleſs, ſome things in common with the perfect drama.—MANNERS *or character.*—*The manners of Job; to be diſtinguiſhed from the paſſions or emotions.*—*The opinion of Ariſtotle, that the character of extreme virtue is not proper for Tragedy, demonſtrated to be neither applicable to Job, nor true with reſpect to Tragedy in general.* —*The deſign of the Poem.*—*The manners of the three friends: the gradations of paſſion more ſtrongly marked in them than the diverſity of manners.*—*Elihu.*—*The expoſtulation of God himſelf.* —SENTIMENTS; *expreſſive of things and of manners; the latter already noticed; the former conſiſt partly of paſſion, partly of deſcription: two examples of the ſofter paſſions: examples of deſcription.*—*The* STYLE *of this Poem uncommonly elegant and ſublime; and the poetic conformation of the ſentences extremely correct.* —*Peroration, recommending the ſtudy of Hebrew literature.*

WHEN I contended that the Poem of Job ought not to be accounted a true and regular drama, ſuch as are the Tragedies of the Greeks, I was far from inſinuating, that it did not poſſeſs the dramatic form. I not only allowed, that in its gene-

ral

ral conduct and economy it exhibited a ſimilitude, an anticipation as it were of genuine Tragedy; but that it contained alſo all the principal requiſites of a dramatic Poem, fable alone excepted: of theſe the firſt and moſt important is, the imitation of manners or character.

The manners are what ſerve to mark or diſcriminate the different perſons, who take a part in the action of the Poem, to declare and expreſs each character's peculiar mode of ſpeaking, thinking, and acting; and compoſe as it were the intellectual image of the man. The principal perſonage in this Poem is Job, and in his character is meant to be exhibited (as far as is conſiſtent with human infirmity) an example of perfect virtue. This is intimated in the argument or introduction, but is ſtill more eminently diſplayed by his own actions and ſentiments. He is holy, devout, and moſt piouſly and reverently impreſſed with the ſacred awe of his divine Creator; he is alſo upright, and conſcious of his own integrity; he is patient of evil, and yet very remote from that inſenſibility or rather ſtupidity to which the Stoic ſchool pretended. Oppreſſed therefore with

unparalleled misfortunes, he laments his misery, and even wishes a release by death; in other words, he obeys, and gives place to the dictates of nature: irritated, however, by the unjust insinuations, and the severe reproaches of his pretended friends, he is more vehemently exasperated, and the too great confidence in his own righteousness leads him to expostulate with God in terms scarcely consistent with piety and strict decorum.

It must be observed, that the first speech of Job, though it burst forth with all the vehemence of passion, consists wholly of complaint, "the words and sentiments of a "despairing person, empty as the wind[1];" which is indeed the apology that he immediately makes for his conduct; intimating, that he is far from presuming to plead with God, far from daring to call in question the divine decrees, or even to mention his own innocence in the presence of his all-just Creator: nor I do see any good reason for the censure which has been passed by some commentators upon this passage. The Poet

[1] JOB vi. 26.

seems,

ſeems, with great judgment and ingenuity, to have performed in this what the nature of his work required. He has depicted the affliction and anguiſh of Job, as flowing from his wounded heart in a manner ſo agreeable to human nature (and certainly ſo far venial) that it may be truly ſaid, "in all this Job "ſinned not with his lips." It is, nevertheleſs, embelliſhed by ſuch affecting imagery, and inſpired with ſuch a warmth and force of ſentiment, that we find it afforded ample ſcope for calumny; nor did the unkind witneſſes of his ſufferings permit ſo fair an opportunity to eſcape. The occaſion is eagerly embraced by Eliphaz, to rebuke the impatience of Job; and, not ſatisfied with this, he proceeds to accuſe him in direct terms of wanting fortitude, and obliquely to inſinuate ſomething of a deeper dye. Though deeply hurt with the coarſe reproaches of Eliphaz, ſtill, however, when Job afterwards complains of the ſeverity of God, he cautiouſly refrains from violent expoſtulations with his Creator, and contented with the ſimple expreſſion of affliction, he humbly confeſſes himſelf a ſinner [2]. Hence, I think,

[2] See chap. vii. 20.

it

it is evident, that thoſe vehement and perverſe atteſtations of his innocence, thoſe murmurs againſt the divine Providence, which his tottering virtue afterwards permits, are to be conſidered merely as the conſequences of momentary paſſion, and not as the ordinary effects of his ſettled character or manners. They prove him at the very worſt not an irreligious man, but a man poſſeſſed of integrity, and too confident of it; a man oppreſſed with almoſt every imaginable evil, both corporal and mental, and hurried beyond the limits of virtue by the ſtrong influence of pain and affliction. When, on the contrary, his importunate viſitors abandon by ſilence the cauſe which they had ſo wantonly and ſo maliciouſly maintained; and ceaſe unjuſtly to load him with unmerited criminations; though he defends his argument with ſcarcely leſs obſtinacy; yet the vehemence of his grief appears gradually to ſubſide, he returns to himſelf, and explains his ſentiments with more candour and ſedateneſs: and however we may blame him for aſſuming rather too much of arrogance in his appeals to the Almighty, certainly his defence againſt the accuſations

cuſations of Eliphaz, is no more than the occaſion will ſtrictly juſtify. Obſerve, in the firſt place, how admirably the confidence and perſeverance of Job is diſplayed in replying to the ſlander of his falſe friends:

" As God liveth, who hath removed my judg-
" ment;
" Nay, as the Almighty liveth, who hath embit-
" tered my ſoul;
" Verily as long as I have life in me,
" And the breath of God is in my noſtrils;
" My lips ſhall not ſpeak perverſity,
" Neither ſhall my tongue whiſper prevarication.
" God forbid that I ſhould declare you righteous!
" Till I expire I will not remove my integrity
" from me.
" I have fortified myſelf in my righteouſneſs,
" And I will not give up my ſtation;
" My heart ſhall not upbraid me as long as I live.
" May mine enemy be as the impious man,
" And he that riſeth up againſt me as the
" wicked[3]."

But how magnificent, how noble, how inviting and beautiful is that image of virtue, in which he delineates his paſt life! What dignity and authority does he ſeem to poſſeſs!

[3] Chap. xxvii. 2—7.

" If

" If I came out to the gate, nigh the place of
" public reſort,
" If I took up my ſeat in the ſtreet;
" The young men ſaw me, and they hid them-
" ſelves;
" Nay, the very old men roſe up and ſtood[4].
" The princes refrained talking,
" Nay, they laid their hands on their mouths.
" The nobles held their peace,
" And their tongue cleaved to the roof of their
" mouth[5]."

What liberality! what a promptitude in beneficence!

" Becauſe the ear heard, therefore it bleſſed me;
" The eye alſo ſaw, therefore it bare teſtimony
" for me.
" That I delivered the poor who cried,
" The orphan alſo, and him who had no helper.

[4] " This is a moſt elegant deſcription, and exhibits " moſt correctly that great reverence and reſpect which " was paid even by the old and decripid to the holy man " in paſſing along the ſtreets, or when he ſat in public. " They not only roſe, which in men ſo old and ſo infirm " was a great mark of diſtinction, but they ſtood: they " continued to do it, though even the attempt was ſo " difficult." H.

[5] Chap. xxix. 7—10.

" The

" The bleſſing of him who was ready to periſh
" came upon me,
" And I cauſed the heart of the widow to ſing
" for joy[6]."

What ſanctity, what integrity in a judicial capacity!

" I put on righteouſneſs, and it clothed me like
" a robe;
" My juſtice alſo was a diadem.
" I was a father to the poor,
" And the controverſy which I knew not, I
" ſearched it out.
" Then brake I the grinders of the oppreſſor,
" And I plucked the prey out of his teeth[7]."

But what can be more engaging than the purity of his devotion, and his reverence for the Supreme Being, founded upon the beſt and moſt philoſophical principles? Beſides that through the whole there runs a ſtrain of the moſt amiable tenderneſs and humanity:

" For what is the portion which God diſtributeth
" from above,
" And the inheritance of the Almighty from on
" high?

[6] Chap. xxix. 11—13. [7] Chap. xxix. 14, 16, 17.

" Is

" Is it not deſtruction to the wicked,
" And baniſhment [8] from their country to the
" doers of iniquity?
" Doth he not ſee my ways?
" And numbereth he not all my ſteps?
" If I ſhould deſpiſe the cauſe of my ſervant,
" Or my maid, when they had a controverſy
" with me,
" What then ſhould I do when God ariſeth,
" And when he viſiteth, what anſwer could I
" make him?
" Did not he who formed me in the belly form
" him,
" And did not One faſhion us in the womb [9]?"

Ariſtotle has remarked, that the example of a ſingularly good man falling from proſperous circumſtances into misfortune, is by no means a proper ſubject for a Tragedy [10];

[8] " Abalienation: or reprobation, repudiation: ſo the " word ſignifies in the Arabic dialect. Abalienation " agrees with the SEPT. verſion, and perfectly expreſſes " the force of the Hebrew word." H.

This paſſage appears to have a manifeſt relation to the hiſtory of Nimrod and his adherents, and may be added to the others which have been already mentioned, in proof of their ſtory having been one of the common-place topics of the Hebrew Poets. S. H.

[9] Chap. xxxi. 2—4. 13—15.

[10] De Poet. cap. xiii.

ſince

ſince it is offenſive and indecent rather than piteous or terrible[11]. This remark, though conſiſtent enough with the Greek drama, and with the ſentiments and manners of the Heathens, is ſcarcely applicable to our Tragedy, and ſtill leſs to the Poem of Job. "Pity," ſays the ſame author on another occaſion, "is excited when adverſity falls "upon thoſe who are undeſerving of it." Great virtue therefore plunged into great misfortunes, ſo far from being an unſuitable ſubject, ought to be the moſt direct and proper means of moving compaſſion. "Terror "is excited by a repreſentation of the miſery "of ſuch perſons as bear the neareſt reſem-"blance to ourſelves:" the misfortunes therefore of thoſe, who are vicious in an extreme, are not much calculated to excite terror; but this is by no means the caſe with regard to the miſery of ſuch as are eminently good; for if we fear for ourſelves when we ſee moderate virtue in affliction, much more,

[11] The opinion of Ariſtotle appears to be, that ſuch a repreſentation is calculated to excite our indignation (poſſibly againſt the Gods); and conſequently that this paſſion is likely to counteract the ſentiments of pity and terror. T.

ſurely,

ſurely, when a ſuperior degree of it is in that ſtate [12]. It appears to me, therefore, that Ariſtotle was not of opinion, that the example of a very good man in extreme affliction is ill calculated to excite either pity or terror; but rather it is a ſpectacle likely to prove injurious to the cauſe of virtue, and therefore diſguſting and deteſtable, and conſequently unfit to be produced upon the ſtage. This opinion of the philoſopher ſeems to reſult from an unjuſt and viſionary eſtimation of human virtue, to repreſs which appears to have been the very deſign and object of the book of Job. The character of Job indeed, though approaching ſo near to the perfection of virtue, ſeems, notwithſtanding, to have a conſiderable alloy of human infirmity, ſo as neither to want probability, nor to loſe its

[12] "Men alſo pity their equals in age, manners, rank, "ſituation, and birth; this indeed brings the evil nearer "to themſelves; and the obvious reflection is, that they "are equally expoſed to it: for it is an eſtabliſhed maxim, "that men pity others on the ſame accounts, and in the "ſame proportion as they fear for themſelves—eſpecially "if the ſufferers be eſteemed good men; for the miſery is "brought immediately before their eyes, and is conſe-"quently rendered more glaring and apparent." ARIST. *Rhet.* ii. 8.

effect

effect in exciting terror. For if it be extreme wickedneſs in the moſt upright of men, when oppreſſed with the ſevereſt miſery, to murmur at all againſt the divine juſtice, who then ſhall ſtand before God? Who ſhall expect to paſs through the pilgrimage of life without his portion of evil and of ſin? The end of the Poem is moreover by no means ill calculated to excite terror; ſince this moral is particularly inculcated in it, "Be not "high-minded, but fear:" and Job himſelf ſets before us, what impreſſion the example of his misfortunes ought to make upon our minds in this reſpect:

"The upright will be aſtoniſhed at this,
"Then the innocent will ſurely riſe up againſt
"the profligate;
"The righteous man will alſo hold on his way,
"And he that hath clean hands will gather
"ſtrength[13]."

The three friends are exactly ſuch characters as the nature of the Poem required. They are ſevere, irritable, malignant cenſors, readily and with apparent ſatisfaction deviating from the purpoſe of conſolation into re-

[13] Chap. xviii. 8, 9.

proof and contumely. Even from the very firſt they manifeſt this evil propenſity, and indicate what is to be expected from them. The firſt of them, indeed, in the opening of his harangue, aſſumes an air of candour:

" Wouldſt thou take it unkindly that one ſhould
" eſſay to ſpeak to thee [14]?"

Indignation is, however, inſtantly predominant:

" But a few words who can forbear?"

The ſecond flames forth at once:

" How long wilt thou trifle in this manner?
" How long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as
" a mighty wind [15]?"

But remark the third:

" Shall not the maſter of words be anſwered?
" Or ſhall a man be acquitted for his fine
" ſpeeches?
" Shall thy prevarications make men ſilent;
" Shalt thou even ſcoff, and there be no one to
" make thee aſhamed [16]?"

[14] Chap. iv. 2. [15] Chap. viii. 2.
[16] Chap. xi. 2, 3.

They

They are repreſented as illiberal, contentious; inclined to torture every thing to the worſt of purpoſes:

" Doth God pervert judgment?
" Doth the Almighty pervert juſtice [17]?"

Where obſerve, Job has not as yet uttered an intemperate expreſſion in diſparagement of the divine juſtice.

" Nay, thou caſteſt off fear,
" And thou reſtraineſt prayer before God [18]:"

Such is the invective of the other of them. They are alſo proud, contemptuous, and arrogate too much to their own wiſdom:

" Why are we accounted as beaſts;
" Why are we vile in your eyes?
" Let him tear himſelf in his fury;
" What, ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee [19]?

Or

[17] Chap. viii. 3. [18] Chap. xv. 4.

[19] " So the LXX. *What! if thou dieſt, ſhall the whole* " *earth be deſolate?* Which verſion, or rather paraphraſe, " is moſt elegant, and in my opinion finely accommo- " dated to the purpoſe of the ſacred writer. When the " Orientals would reprove the pride or arrogance of " any perſon, it is common for them to deſire him to call " to mind how little and contemptible he and every mor- " tal is, in theſe or ſimilar apothegms;

" Or ſhall the rock be outrooted from its place?
" Rather let the light of the wicked be extin-
" guiſhed [20]."

Nor is Zophar, who takes up the ſubject after Bildad, more modeſt:

" Verily the impulſe of my thoughts incite me
" to reply,
" Even becauſe there is ſome reſentment within
" me:
" I hear the ignominious reproof that is aimed
" at me,
" And the ſpirit within me compels me to
" anſwer [21]."

The conduct of all theſe malicious cenſors is much the ſame through the whole piece.

" What though Mahammed were dead?
" His *Imauns* (or miniſters) conducted the affairs of the
" nation.

" The univerſe ſhall not fall for his ſake.

" The world does not ſubſiſt for one man alone.

" Nay, this very phraſe is ſtill in uſe among the Arabic
" writers, עומת אל ארץ, " the earth is deſolate." GOL. col. 1570. H.

[20] Chap. xviii. 3—5. [21] Chap. xx. 2, 3.

Eliphaz

Eliphaz indeed, who begins in the mildeſt terms, deſcends afterwards to the ſevereſt reproaches; and he directly charges Job with the moſt atrocious offences: from which intemperance of language, it muſt be confeſſed, the others refrain. Bildad, not to be ſilent, repeats in a brief and florid manner the ſubject, which had already been twice treated of by the others, namely, the majeſty and holineſs of God; and Zophar, withdrawing from the conteſt, deſerts entirely the cauſe of his companion, and leaves the field to Job. The buſineſs of defamation indeed ſeems, with great propriety, committed to three perſons. It would have been too confined and trivial in the hands of one; and, amongſt a croud of accuſers, too confuſed and clamorous. There appears, however, but little difference in the manners of the three friends; for in them the poet has rather ſtudied to diſplay the progreſs of the paſſions, than any diverſity of character. But though the nice and faſtidious criticiſm of the moderns demand variety in this reſpect, the ſimplicity of infant Poetry will be excuſed by every perſon of real judgment; and I think this deficiency (if ſuch it may be called) is amply

compenſated by the gravity and importance of the ſubject and ſentiments.

The lenity and moderation of Elihu ſerves as a beautiful contraſt to the intemperance and aſperity of the other three. He is pious, mild, and equitable; equally free from adulation and ſeverity; and endued with ſingular wiſdom, which he attributes entirely to the inſpiration of God: and his modeſty, moderation, and wiſdom, are the more entitled to commendation when we conſider his unripe youth. As the characters of his detractors were in all reſpects calculated to inflame the mind of Job; that of this arbitrator is admirably adapted to ſooth and compoſe it: to this point the whole drift of the argument tends, and on this the very purport of it ſeems to depend.

The interpoſition of the Deity, and its connexion with the general deſign of the Poem, I have formerly noticed. I will only add, that although ſome critics have really thought the whole addreſs inconſiſtent, and foreign to the ſubject, no man has ever accounted it in any reſpect unworthy of that ſupreme Majeſty to which it is aſcribed.

Another

Another circumſtance deſerving particular attention in a Poem of this kind, is the ſentiment; which muſt be agreeable to the ſubject, and embelliſhed with proper expreſſion. It is by Ariſtotle enumerated among the eſſentials of a Dramatic Poem; not indeed as peculiar to that ſpecies of Poetry alone, but as common, and of the greateſt importance to all. Manners or character are eſſential only to that poetry in which living perſons are introduced; and all ſuch Poems muſt afford an exact repreſentation of human manners: but ſentiment is eſſential to every Poem, indeed to every compoſition whatever. It reſpects both perſons and things; as far as it regards perſons, it is particularly concerned in the delineation of the manners and paſſions: and thoſe inſtances to which I have juſt been adverting, are ſentiments expreſſive of manners. Thoſe which relate to the delineation of the paſſions, and to the deſcription of other objects, yet remain unnoticed in this Lecture. As I formerly, however, treated of theſe ſubjects in general, I could ſcarcely avoid producing ſome examples from this Poem; for in demonſtrating the power of the poetic diction in exciting the paſſions, I could not

poſſibly deduce my inſtances from a better ſource [22]. On the preſent occaſion, therefore, I ſhall ſtudy brevity, and avoid as much as poſſible the tedioufneſs of repetition.

The Poem of Job abounds chiefly in the more vehement paſſions, grief and anger, indignation and violent contention. It is adapted in every reſpect to the incitement of terror; and, as the ſpecimens already quoted will ſufficiently prove, is univerſally animated with the true ſpirit of ſublimity. It is however not wanting in the gentler affections; the following complaints, for inſtance, are replete with an affecting ſpirit of melancholy:

" Man, the offspring of a woman,
" Is of few days, and full of inquietude;
" He ſpringeth up, and is cut off like a flower;
" He fleeteth like a ſhadow, and doth not abide:
" Upon ſuch a creature doſt thou open thine
" eyes?
" And wilt thou bring even me into judgment
" with Thee?
" Turn thy look from him, that he may have
" ſome reſpite,

[22] See LECT. xiv. xvi. xvii.

" Till

" Till he ſhall, like a hireling, have completed[23]
" his day[24]."

The whole paſſage abounds with the moſt beautiful imagery, and is a moſt perfect ſpecimen of the Elegiac. His grief afterwards becomes more fervent; but is at the ſame time ſoft and querimonious.

" How long will ye vex my ſoul,
" And tire me with vain harangues?
" Theſe ten times have ye loaded me with re-
" proaches,
" Are ye not aſhamed that ye are ſo obſtinate
" againſt me[25]?

" Pity

[23] " Or until he *ſhall acquieſce:* or *ſhall make ſatisfaction* " (the original will bear either interpretation); for the " word in the Arabic dialect ſometimes ſignifies, He *did* " *or afforded to another, what he held to be agreeable to him-* " *ſelf.*" H.

[24] Chap. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 6.

[25] " I think the word תהכרו occurs but this once in the " Scriptures and (as is my uſual practice when I meet with " any ſuch words or phraſes) I conſulted the Arabic Lexi- " cographers. They explain it by two other words, the " one is עגב to *admire*, the other is האר to *wonder*, *to be* " *aſtoniſhed.* Whence הכר *to wonder in amazement* (*to be* " *overcome with aſtoniſhment*, as GIGGEIUS explains it) " and the ſenſe of the paſſage will be, *are you not aſhamed*

" *to*

" Pity me, O pity me, ye are my friends,
" For the hand of God hath ſmitten me.
" Why will you be my perſecutors as well as
" God,
" And therefore will ye not be ſatisfied with my
" fleſh[26]?"

That ſelf-indulgence which is ſo natural to the paſſion of Hope; its ingenuity in drawing pictures of future felicity; its credulity in cheriſhing theſe ideas, and the gaiety and elevation of mind with which it deſcribes them, are finely expreſſed by Job in the paſſage immediately following the relation of his paſt life:

" Therefore I ſaid I ſhall die in my neſt;
" I ſhall multiply my days like the ſand:
" My root was ſpread abroad nigh the waters,
" And the dew lay all night on my branches:

" *to gaze at me.*" KIMCHI ſays, his father affirmed, that " the word הכר ſignifies in Arabic *impudence* or *forward-* " *neſs*; I do not however find this interpretation con- " firmed by the Lexicons which I have conſulted. But " ſtill if we ſuppoſe, that the word תהכרו is derived " from נכר, the explication of Kimchi may be accepted; " but the form of the verb will be anomalous. It is " however ſafeſt perhaps to adhere to the common tran- " ſlation." H.

[26] Chap. xix. 2, 3, 21, 22.

" My

" My glory was freſh within me,
" And my bow gained ſtrength in my hand.
" They hearkned to me, nay they waited for
" me;
" They were ſilent alſo, they approved my
" counſel.
" After I had ſpoken they replied not;
" For my words dropped upon them:
" They waited alſo for me as the rain;
" And their mouths were open as for the latter
" rain[27]."

To this part of the ſubject, which relates to the delineation of the paſſions, may be referred thoſe delicate touches which animate almoſt every deſcription, and which are drawn from the moſt intimate knowledge of the genuine emotions of the human ſoul. I ſhall content myſelf with one example out of the many which the compaſs of the work affords. It is exactly copied from Nature; for when events take place according to our ardent wiſhes, but quite contrary to our expectations, we have the utmoſt difficulty to believe them real. Job thus expreſſes himſelf reſpecting God:

[27] Chap. xxix. 11—23.

" If

" If I called upon him and he ſhould anſwer me,
" Yet could I ſcarcely believe that he had heard
" my voice [28]."

This is admirably expreſſive both of the majeſty of God, and of the ſeverity which he exerciſed towards Job; it is alſo no leſs deſcriptive of the humiliation and deſpair of the ſufferer.

" If I were merry with them they would not be-
" lieve it [29]:"

ſays Job of his dependants; in which is expreſſed his own dignity and gravity united with urbanity, and at the ſame time their unviolated attachment to him. Thus too, by the ſame circumſtance is depicted both the ardour and alacrity of the war-horſe, and his eagerneſs for the battle:

" For eagerneſs and fury he devoureth the very
" ground;
" He believeth it not when he heareth the
" trumpet.
" When the trumpet ſoundeth, he ſaith, ahah!
" Yea he ſcenteth the battle from afar,
" The thunder of the chieftains and their
" ſhouts [30]."

[28] Chap. ix. 16. [29] Chap. xxix. 24.
[30] Chap. xxxix. 24, 25.

This

This paſſage, which has indeed always attracted general admiration, will alſo ſerve to exemplify the excellence of the deſcriptive parts of this poem: and from the ſame circumſtance we may fairly conjecture, that the pictures, which are exhibited in other parts of the work, would appear no leſs ſtriking reſemblances of the realities, were we equally well acquainted with the originals. To judge rightly of a deſcription, we ought to have as clear and diſtinct ideas of the thing itſelf as the author. The idea of thunder is familiar to all mankind; obſerve, therefore, how it is depicted by Elihu:

" At this my heart trembleth,
" And is ready to bound from its place.
" Hearken attentively, and tremble at his voice;
" Even at the ſound that goeth out of his mouth.
" Its flaſh is beneath the whole heavens,
" And its blaze to the ends of the earth.
" After it a voice roareth;
" He thundereth with the voice of his majeſty:
" He deceiveth them not when his voice is
" heard [1]."

It

1. That is, " they cannot miſtake his voice for any " thing beſide." HEATH. JOB, chap. xxxvii. 1—4.

In

It would be ſuperfluous to inſiſt any longer on a minute detail, ſince the moſt ſplendid examples of every beauty and elegance of ſentiment, of imagery, and of diction, meet the eye of the attentive reader in every part of the Poem. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that the dignity of the ſtyle is anſwerable to that of

In the laſt line it ſeems as if we ſhould read יעקב (he will not deceive) with the VULG. and SYMMACHUS. For this correction I am indebted to the learned RICHARD GREY, who has paid a very critical attention to this Poem.

"The true ſenſe is perhaps, *he does it not at intervals or* "*by fits*, i. e. *thunders*, &c. but *continually*: which, "among others, is the ſenſe of the word in the Arabic "dialect. And the expoſition of R. L. B. GERSHOM, "he *does not defer*, or *delay*, agrees very well with this "opinion; as well as our common Engliſh tranſlation, "which is thus far preferable to that of the VULGATE "and SYMMACHUS, namely, that it requires no change "of the text. This alſo, in all probability, is the mean-"ing of the Septuagint verſion, Ουκ αλλαλαξει αυτω; "though this ſeems to relate to the hearers, when in "reality it ſhould relate to the things heard." H.

Author's Note.

"See whether the verb (*ſhemang*) be ever conſtrued "with *beth*, except in the ſenſe *obeying*, which does not "agree with the context in this place. It ſeems better "therefore to conſtrue the verb with *kolu*, and to render "the ſentence in this manner—*Hear his voice attentively,* "*and with trembling.*" H.

the ſubject; its force and energy to the greatneſs of thoſe paſſions which it deſcribes: and as this production excels all the other remains of the Hebrew Poetry in economy and arrangement, ſo it yields to none in ſublimity of ſtyle, and in every grace and excellence of compoſition. Among the principal of theſe may be accounted the accurate and perfectly poetical conformation of the ſentences, which is indeed generally moſt obſervable in the moſt ancient of the poetical compoſitions of the Hebrews. Here, however, as is natural and proper in a poem of ſo great length and ſublimity, the writer's ſkill is diſplayed in the proper adjuſtment of the period, and in the accurate diſtribution of the members, rather than in the antitheſis of words, or in any laboured adaptation of the paralleliſms.

HAVING now gone through the ſeveral topics, of which I purpoſed to treat in my inveſtigation of the nature of the Hebrew Poetry, it is time that my preſent undertaking ſhould draw towards a concluſion. If in the proſecution of my deſign, I have by my induſtry been able to accompliſh any thing that may be deemed ſatisfactory, it is but

but common juſtice to attribute the greateſt part of my ſucceſs to you, Gentlemen, who have condeſcended to look with a propitious eye upon my endeavours, and to invigorate my application by your attention and partiality. When, indeed, I firſt meditated this ſyſtem of inſtruction, I foreſaw, as well from the native ſublimity and obſcurity of the ſubject, as from the extreme antiquity of the Hebrew writings, much ſubtile inveſtigation, much difficult explication, much doubtful aſſertion, and dangerous error. I foreſaw too, and daily experience confirmed my apprehenſions, that in this maze of ſcience, the veſtiges and the documents of the learned would be frequently found but imperfect guides. That my courage did not utterly forſake me in the courſe of my undertaking, is to be attributed entirely to the favour and encouragement which I received from you. I had the ſatisfaction to find my plan meet with the approbation of ſome of the greateſt and moſt eminent characters in the learned world, as being neither inconſiſtent with the deſign of this inſtitution, the dignity of this Univerſity, nor the profit and utility of the ſtudents. I had often the ſingular pleaſure

ſure of ſeeing, among my auditors, many perſons, to whom it would better become me to apply for inſtruction in this and in every other branch of literature; and the young men, for whoſe benefit this inſtitution was eſtabliſhed, I have found ever diligent and conſtant in their attendance: all which teſtimonies of your favour, unleſs I accounted as obligations, I ſhould think either too arrogantly of myſelf, or too diſreſpectfully of you. To all of you, therefore, I feel, and ſhall for ever feel myſelf obliged: the remembrance of your kindneſs will, in every viciſſitude of my condition, be pleaſing to me; nor is there any danger of my ſuffering that to eſcape my memory, which I muſt ever eſteem the great ornament of my life.

But to return to a point which is of more importance, and which has indeed been the principal object of all my endeavours. I ſhould now think myſelf called upon, in the laſt place, to exhort this aſſembly of accompliſhed youths to an aſſiduous application to theſe ſtudies; but that I confeſs I think you rather demand commendation than advice. For the Hebrew language, which was for a ſeries of years in a manner obſolete and neglect-

ed, has been lately cultivated by you with ſuch attention and application, and has obtained ſo reſpectable a place among the other branches of erudition, that it ſeems, through your means, to have recovered, after a tedious exile, all its former dignity and importance. Proceed, therefore, in the ſame career with the ſame ardour and ſucceſs, and conſider it as a work worthy of your utmoſt exertions to illuſtrate and cultivate this department of literature. You will find it no leſs elegant and agreeable, than uſeful and inſtructive; abounding in information no leſs curious for its extent and variety, than for its great importance and venerable ſanctity; deſerving the attention of every liberal mind; eſſential to all who would be proficients in theology: a branch of literature, in a word, which will confer credit upon yourſelves, will be an honour to the univerſity, and an advantage to the church. I congratulate you, Gentlemen, on having an Inſtructor [32], who, from his authority, example, aſſiduity, and information, will be found in no reſpect wanting to your profit and accommodation:

[32] Dr. THOMAS HUNT, King's Profeſſor of Hebrew, and Laudian Profeſſor of the Arabic language.

a gen-

a Gentleman no leſs eminent for his abilities and profound erudition, than for the candour, urbanity, and gentleneſs of his manners. He will unfold to you the inexhauſtible treaſures of Oriental literature, he will open to your view an unbounded field of ſcience and of fame. It is ſufficient for me to have diſcovered to you a few of the more delightful retreats of this paradice: and could I flatter myſelf that my endeavours have been ſo fortunate as to allure or excite any to theſe ſtudies, or even to ſtimulate and keep alive your attention to this department of literature, I ſhould think that I had received the moſt honourable, the moſt grateful reward of my labours.

A BRIEF

CONFUTATION

OF

BISHOP HARE's

SYSTEM of HEBREW METRE.

IT is well known, that an hypotheſis was invented by the late Biſhop Hare concerning the Hebrew metres; and the arguments, which he had advanced in its favour, appeared ſo concluſive to ſome perſons of great erudition, as to perſuade them, that the learned prelate had fortunately revived the knowledge of the true Hebrew verſification, after an oblivion of more than two thouſand years; and that he had eſtabliſhed his opinion by ſuch irreſiſtible proofs, as to place it beyond the utmoſt efforts of controverſy. Whoever, indeed, encounters it in ſuch a manner, as only to call in queſtion ſome particular part, to intimate only an occaſional ſcruple, or to attack but one or two of his arguments, will, doubtleſs, "attempt in

"vain

"vain [1] to root out of their minds an opi-
"nion which has been ſo deeply implanted
"and eſtabliſhed by the authority of ſo
"great a man: much leſs will any perſon
"obtain credit who ſhall affirm, that he has
"diſcovered what was not diſcovered by the
"learned Prelate, unleſs by the ſtrongeſt
"arguments he not only overthrows the
"hypotheſis which he rejects, but confirms
"his own. Avoiding therefore every ſub-
"terfuge, I ſhall come immediately to the
"point, and demonſtrate by the cleareſt and
"moſt deciſive inſtances, which is the only
"method of extorting aſſent from the incre-
"dulous, that I have actually diſcovered the
"nature and principles of this poetry," and thoſe directly contrary to the ſyſtem which he has adopted. I ſhall, on this occaſion, make uſe of the ſame example that Biſhop Hare himſelf has choſen; which, when properly conſidered, will, I think, ſufficiently explain and prove my opinion; and at the ſame time effectually overturn his hypotheſis.

[1] See Hare's Preface to the Pſalms, at the beginning.

PSALM CXI.

1. odéh javóh becól lebáb, i.
2. beſód jeſárim véyedáh.

3. gédolím mayaſé javóh, ii.
4. dérusím lecól chepzéhem.

5. hód vehádar póyaló, iii.
6. veziḋkathó yomédeth láyad.

7. zecér yaſáh leníphlotháv; iv.
8. chánun vérachúm javóh.

9. téreph náthan líreáv, v.
10. jízcor léyolám berítho.

11. coách mayaſáv higíd leyámo, vi.
12. lathéth lahém nachálath góim.

13. mayaſé jadáv eméth umíſpat; vii.
14. neemánim cól pikdúav:

15. ſemúcim láyad léyolám, viii.
16. yáſuím beeméth vejáſar.

17. pedúth ſalách leyámo, ix.
18. zívah léyolám berítho,

19. kâdoſ vénorá ſemó; x.
20. reſíth chocmáh jiráth javoh.

21. ſécel tób lecól yoſéhem, xi.
22. tehíllathó yomédeth láyad.

From this alphabetic Pſalm, which is divided into its proper verſes according to the initial letters, and reſtored to its proper numbers without any violation of the text, without even any change of the Maſoretic vowels (except that with Biſhop Hare, I read *javoh*) the canons of the Hebrew metre are to be collected and eſtabliſhed.

I. [2] In the firſt place then, in the Hebrew Poetry the feet are not all diſſyllables: for in verſe 3, 11, 16.—lím maya—cóach

[2] The following are the principal rules or canons of Biſhop Hare:

1. In Hebrew Poetry all the feet are two ſyllables.

2. No regard is paid to the quantity of the ſyllables.

3. When the number of the ſyllables is even, the verſe is Trochaic, placing the accent on the firſt ſyllable.

4. If the number of ſyllables be odd, they are to be accounted Iambics, and the accent is to be placed on the ſecond ſyllable, in order to preſerve the rythm.

5. The periods moſtly conſiſt of two verſes, often three or four, and ſometimes more.

6. The verſes of the ſame period, with few exceptions, are of the ſame kind.

7. The Trochaic verſes moſtly agree in the number of feet: there are however a few exceptions.

8. In the Iambic verſes the feet are moſtly unequal, though in ſome inſtances they are equal.

9. Each verſe does not contain a diſtinct ſenſe.

See HARE's *Prof.* p. 27.

maya—ím be—are Dactyls; in verſe 13, 14, mayaſé, neemá—are Anapæſts: contrary to the firſt canon of Biſhop Hare.

II. Attention muſt always be paid to the quantity of the ſyllables, for the ſame word, as often as it occurs, is always of the ſame quantity; for inſtance, javóh, lecól, are conſtantly Iambics, láyad is always a Trochaic, mayaſé an Anapæſt; léyolám is uniformly an Amphimaſer: berítho, yomédeth, is an Amphibrachis: contrary to the ſecond canon of Biſhop Hare.

III. The verſes are either Trochaic, which admit a Dactyl; or Iambic, which admit an Anapæſt; but it by no means follows, that a verſe is either the one or the other, from its conſiſting of an even or odd number of ſyllables. Thoſe indeed which conſiſt of an even number of ſyllables, are, for the moſt part, Iambic, as verſe 1, 2, 7, 13, 14, 15, 20; but they are alſo ſometimes Trochaic, as verſe 3, 4, 10, 18, 21; and thoſe which conſiſt of an odd number of ſyllables are moſtly Trochaic, as verſe 5, 8, 9, 11, 16, 19; they are however ſometimes Iambic, as verſe 6, 12, 17, 22: contrary to the third and fourth canon.

IV.

IV. The verſes of the ſame period are of different kinds, period iii, iv, vi, viii, ix, x, xi. a few only excepted, as period i, ii, v, vii; and thoſe which are of the ſame kind ſeldom agree in the number of ſyllables and feet: for inſtance, in period ii, and v. the firſt verſe is a Trochaic Dimeter Catalectic, the ſecond a Trochaic Dimeter Acatalectic; in period vii. the firſt is an Iambic Dimeter Hypercatalectic, the ſecond an Iambic Dimeter Catalectic: the only inſtance of verſes agreeing in kind, agreeing alſo in ſyllables and feet is in period i. and thoſe are Iambics: and this is contrary to the ſixth, ſeventh, and eighth canons.

V. All the periods conſiſt of only two verſes; for properly *koph* and *reſh* conſtitute the penultimate, and *ſhin* and *tau* the ultimate period; as alſo appeared to the learned Cappell[3]: this is contrary to the fifth canon.

VI. Each verſe has one particular ſenſe: contrary to the ninth canon.

" That what I have advanced as true and " indiſputable, is moſt true, appears from " the examples which I have adduced; and

3 See CAPPELL. Crit. Sac. lib. i. cap. xii. 11.

" whoever reads attentively the book of " Pſalms, will find ſimilar inſtances in al- " moſt every page [4]."

Since

[4] See Hare's Preface, p. 31. The reader has doubtleſs obſerved, that to eſtabliſh our two laſt Canons, and perhaps the others, a general propoſition is deduced from a particular inſtance: viz. ſo it is in this Pſalm, and ſo, therefore it muſt be in all Hebrew Poems whatever; in this, however, I only copy Biſhop Hare; for to ſay the truth, upon this mode of reaſoning, and begging the queſtion at the ſame time, depends his whole hypotheſis.

I find theſe obſervations have greatly diſpleaſed Dr. THOMAS EDWARDS, a ſtrenuous advocate for Biſhop Hare's Metres. Towards the concluſion of his Diſſertation lately publiſhed he aſſerts, that I did not underſtand what I preſumed to cenſure: and to this accuſation I indeed plead guilty. For I will freely confeſs, that I neither did underſtand, nor do I yet underſtand what metre can exiſt without any diſtinction of long and ſhort ſyllables, or what can be meant by Trochaic, Iambic, and Anacreontic feet and verſes, where no regard is paid to the quantity of the ſyllables. Nor do I underſtand any better, what purpoſe the confutation of my hypotheſis can anſwer, ſince I gave it myſelf as futile and falſe, and ſince the futility of it was one of the ſtrongeſt arguments againſt the hypotheſis of Hare. This argument can only be done away by proving, that my hypotheſis is not founded upon the ſame, or upon principles equally clear and certain with Biſhop Hare's: this unfortunately his defender has not done, nor indeed can he do.

With

Since this is the caſe, ſince I have deduced happily the abſtruſe principles of the Hebrew

With regard to his accuſation, that I have acted dogmatically, and that I have upon my own authority, and without any regard to reaſon affirmed, that the hypotheſis of Biſhop Hare depends altogether upon his taking for granted the very point to be proved; in order to exonerate myſelf from ſo invidious an imputation, and in order to confirm what I before had advanced, I muſt requeſt the reader's attention to the following particulars.

The cxith Pſalm is propoſed as an example, and is divided into verſes, whence the laws of Hebrew verſification are to be deduced. We grant that in this Pſalm the verſes are rightly diſtinguiſhed, ſince it is alphabetical, and the members of each period are nearly equal. But what is this to the eſtabliſhment of a certain rule for the diviſion of others, which are neither alphabetical, nor ſeem capable of a regular and equal diſtribution of the ſentences and members? Indeed, ſuch is the difficulty of Biſhop Hare's hypotheſis in this reſpect, that according to it a number of the Pſalms are divided, not only arbitrarily and oddly, but inelegantly, injudiciouſly, contrary to the genius of the Hebrew Poetry, and contrary to every appearance of truth. We will take for an example the firſt Pſalm, on which the author prides himſelf not a little. But when divided into verſes, by what rule is it accented? Why in this rather than any other manner? How is it proved, that when the number of ſyllables is even, the verſe is Trochaic, when odd, Iambic? From the nature and principles of Trochaic and Iambic verſe? By no means—(for in the Greek and Latin Trochaics and Iambics, the caſe is directly contrary) but merely from the

pleaſure

brew metre from this Pſalm, or rather explained clearly ſuch as readily preſented themſelves,

pleaſure and will of the author. Why then may not I, or any other perſon, affix different accents to this cxith or any other Pſalm, and ſo turn the Trochaics of Biſhop Hare into Iambics, and his Iambics into Trochaic? By what rule too are the ſyllables numbered? According to the Maſoretic punctuation? By no means: for the Maſoretic number of ſyllables is altered, and that, as by a previous rule, or according to an eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of metre, which exiſted before the punctuation; as from this Pſalm ſo ordered and illuſtrated, the rules of metre are afterwards to be collected. "But I do not deſert "the Maſoretic punctuation, unleſs an erroneous punc- "tuation interferes with the metre." This would be a ſound argument, if it were previouſly determined what theſe rules of metre were. But for what good reaſon are all triſyllabic metres excluded from the Hebrew Poetry? "Becauſe truly, if the triſyllabic feet were admitted, a "diſtinction of long and ſhort ſyllables would have place "neceſſarily in the Hebrew Poetry." And why ſhould it not? "In Hebrew Poetry there is no reſpect at all to "the quantity of the ſyllables." A moſt extraordinary aſſertion, and ſcarcely credible! But that ſo it might be, learn from the teſtimony of your eyes and ears. "For "from this Pſalm it is evident, that no regard is paid to "quantity in the Hebrew Poetry; ſince in the 4th and "5th verſes, not to mention other inſtances, the *le* and "*w* are long. On the other hand, in the fifteenth and "twenty-ſecond, *im* in *ſemucion*, and *hil* in *tehillatho*, are "ſhort." That is, according to Hare, the ſhorteſt ſyllable may be made uſe of inſtead of the longeſt (ſuch indeed

ſelves, and have reduced them to an art eaſy, perfect, and conſiſtent; depending upon principles certain and ſelf-evident: but not taking thoſe liberties in which Biſhop Hare has prolixly indulged himſelf, ſo as to make the ſame word ſometimes Trochaic, ſometimes Iambic, ſometimes a Diſſyllable, and ſometimes a Triſyllable; I may reaſonably indulge myſelf in the hope, that the candid reader will prefer my hypotheſis to that of Biſhop Hare. This at leaſt I truſt I may expect,

deed he acknowledges them to be) in his Trochaic and Iambic meaſures; and on the other hand, the longeſt may be introduced inſtead of the ſhorteſt: of which this Pſalm affords the precedent: and on the authority of this precedent, a law is framed to ſerve in all other caſes: and when we aſk, upon other evidence, the reaſon of the fact, he refers us to his own authority and his own example. For, indeed, ſays he, this is the plain ſtate of the caſe; "that this, and all that I have urged upon this ſubject, "is undoubtedly fact, is plain from the examples which "I have produced; and muſt ſtrike every reaſonable per- "ſon who only looks into a ſingle page of the book of "Pſalms." I confeſs it, indeed, moſt learned Prelate, if we look into your Pſalms: but I fear we ſhall then be very little nearer the truth; ſince it is by no means a decided point, that your Pſalms are rightly and judiciouſly divided into verſes, feet, and ſyllables.

See "A larger Confutation of Biſhop Hare's Hebrew "Metres, in a Letter to Dr: EDWARDS, Lond. 1764."
Author's Note.

that

that he will treat them upon equal terms, and allow to each the ſame authority, that is —NONE AT ALL.

In the ſame manner every hypotheſis, which pretends to define the laws of Hebrew metre, and to preſcribe the numbers, the feet, the ſcanning of the lines, may, I think, be eaſily overſet: for to that hypotheſis another directly contrary, yet confirmed by arguments equally forcible, may, I am perſuaded, be ſucceſsfully oppoſed.

With regard to the opinion of thoſe who ſuppoſe the whole art of Hebrew metre to conſiſt in a ſimilarity of terminatoin to each verſe; though it has acquired ſome popularity and authority in the learned world, I think it by far the moſt ill-founded of all; and I think its abſurdity ſo obvious, that with the utmoſt eaſe it may be detected. Since the endings of the verſes are defined in ſome of the alphabetical Poems, and ſince it is manifeſt, that in theſe the verſes do not end alike, that no art or attention has been beſtowed upon that point, it follows of courſe that the art of Hebrew verſification does not conſiſt in making verſes with ſimilar endings.

APPEN-

APPENDIX,

Referred to from Page 31.

PSALM CXXXV.

ΠΡΟΑΣΜΑ, or *Prelude.* Part 1.

High Prieſt and Prieſts, to the Levites:
Praiſe ye Jah!

Levites, to the Prieſts:
Praiſe ye the name Jehovah!

Prieſts and Levites, to the Congregation:
Praiſe him, O ye ſervants of Jehovah!

The Congregation, to the Prieſts:
Ye, that ſtand in the houſe of Jehovah!

The Congregation, to the Levites:
In the courts of the houſe of our God!

ΠΡΟΑΣΜΑ. 2.

Prieſts, to the Levites:
Praiſe ye Jah, for Jehovah is good.

Levites, to the Congregation:
Sing praiſes unto his name, for it is pleaſant.

Congregation, joining both Prieſts and Levites:
For Jah hath choſen Jacob unto himſelf,
Iſrael for his peculiar treaſure.

HYMN.

High Prieſt, followed by the Prieſts:
For I know that Jehovah is great,
Even our Lord above all gods.

Levites:
Whatſoever Jehovah pleaſed,
He did in heaven, and in earth,
In the ſeas, and in deep places:

Congregation:

Congregation:

He causeth the vapours to rise from the ends of the earth,
He maketh lightnings for the rain:
He bringeth the wind out of his treasuries.

High Priest, accompanied by the Priests:

Who smote the first-born of Ægypt,
Both of man and of beast.

Levites:

Sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Ægypt;

Congregation:

Upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

High Priest and Priests:

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings:

Levites:

Sihon, king of the Amorites,
And Og, king of Basan,
And all the kingdoms of Canaan.

Congregation:

And he gave their land an heritage,
An heritage with Israel his people.

Priests:

Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever.

Levites:

Thy memorial, O Jehovah, throughout all generations.

Priests, Levites, and Congregation in full chorus:

For Jehovah will judge his people;
And will repent him concerning his servants.

II.

High Priest, accompanied by the Priests:

The idols of the Heathen—silver and gold!
The work of mortal hands.

Levites:

They have mouths, but they speak not;
Eyes have they, but they see not.

Congregation:

They have ears, but they hear not;
Neither is there any truth in their mouths.

Levites;

Prieſts, Levites, and Congregation in full chorus:
They that make them are like unto them;
Every one that truſteth in them.

Αντιφωνησις.

High Prieſt and Prieſts, to the Congregation:
Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Iſrael!

Congregation, to the High Prieſt and Prieſts:
Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Aaron!

High Prieſt and Prieſts, to the Levites:
Bleſs Jehovah, O houſe of Levi!

Levites, to High Prieſt and Prieſts:
Ye that fear Jehovah, bleſs Jehovah!

Prieſts, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus:
Bleſſed be Jehovah out of Sion,
Who dwelleth in Jeruſalem!

Full chorus, continuing each diviſion to both the reſt:
Praiſe ye, Jah!

The praiſing the name JEHOVAH, ſo often mentioned in Scripture, ariſes from the anſwer to the queſtion of Moſes. EXOD. iii. 13. H. S. H.

AN

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TO THE

PASSAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,

WHICH ARE CITED, EXPLAINED, OR REFERRED TO IN THE

LECTURES.

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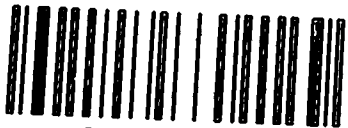
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